Handout for

Getting What You Ask For: Creating Effective Assessment Tools for Projects, Personnel and Programs.

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Complete set of handouts can be downloaded from www.doug-johnson.com/pres.html

Getting What You Ask For: Creating Effective Assessment Tools for Projects, Personnel and Programs. (synopsis)

It's tough for students, teachers or administrators to give us what we'd like unless we can describe the end result and measure it's quality. This session will give an overview of the difference between evaluation and assessment, look at some authentic assessment tools used for a variety of purposes, and give the participant the chance to practice building a checklist and rubric. A bibliography of exemplary assessment sites is included.

Testing	Assessing
Sorts	**Improves**
Final	**Growth**
Normed	**Performance**
Non-applied	**Applied**
High stakes	**Low stakes**
Unexpected material	**Known expectations**
Teacher directed	**Completed by students, parents, others as well as teacher**
One right answer	**Multiple solutions**
Neat	**Messy**
Whole group	**Individual**

Happy people evaluate themselves; unhappy people evaluate others.
William Glasser

Getting What You Ask For

I've discovered a great technique for getting what I want for Christmas. I describe the hoped-for gift – precisely. I've learned that by simply asking for a tie, heaven only knows what I'll receive. If I ask for a red and gray tie, my chances improve. But, if lead my daughter by the hand to the Jerry Garcia's at the local department store and "ooh" and "ah" over one or two I am pretty sure to get something to my taste.

As educators begin to work with students on performance skills that cannot be evaluated by standard paper and pencil tests, the ability to write an assessment instrument that clearly articulates a desired quality level becomes critical. Whether in the form of a rubric, a checklist, or a benchmark, creating tools that describe what is expected of learners can help educators dramatically improve instruction.

Library media specialists and technology teachers have a leadership role in implementing these new forms of assessment. Having had experience with "project-based" learning, we can use our experiences to teach teachers effective means of evaluating performances and projects through both inservices and by modeling the assessments of joint library/classroom projects. Our media specialists and teachers are becoming increasingly proficient at writing good assessment instruments. Here are some of their "secrets:"

1) Describe what you want in observable terms Remember the tie analogy? The more specific you can be with the indicators of quality, the easier it will be for students to determine the quality for themselves. A hypermedia stack about a historical period might include checklist items such as:

- the location and the years
- correct transportation
- people doing their daily work
- main geographical features
- important or famous people, sayings or documents
- proper clothing
- tools and weapons
- key events.
-symbols (religious, job-related or holiday)

2) Two strands: content and container. Remember getting back English papers that had two grades: one for content and one for mechanics? Projects that use technology to help communicate the content really need two separate sets of assessment criteria – one for the content and one for the electronic container of that content. Whether it is a videotape, a hypermedia stack, an electronic slideshow, a word processed document, a desk-top published brochure, a spreadsheet, or a database, an assessment tool that describes the effective use of the container needs to be developed. Quality container criteria for the hypermedia stack above might include:

- a minimum of eight cards, each with a uniform background and layout style
- easily seen and understood navigation buttons
- a logical organization and structure for the stack
- readable text
- graphics, sounds and movies used to add to the understanding of the topic

3) Use examples of past high quality work. Using past student work, students need to see or read actual examples of quality. The "critical elements," as Mankato media specialist Kathy Wortel describes them, need to be listed. One of the dangers that using examples presents is that students may be tempted to copy the examples too closely. One way to prevent this is to change the assignment enough that this becomes impossible. If a research assignment looks at the attributes of effective leaders, one year ask students to choose scientists as subjects, the next year social activists. If geographic regions are being studied, questions one year can be about environmental issues, the next year about the effect of geography has on living conditions.

4) Give criteria to the learner at the time of making the assignment. Assessment tools need to be shared with students at the time the assignment is given, not after it is complete. That way students have a roadmap to follow as they work on the project. The goal should be: NO SURPRISES. Here is the task. Here are the quality indicators. Go to it.

5) Use the assessment tool to help guide revisions. Jean Donham at the University of Iowa reminds us that the term assessment has its roots in a Latin word that means "to sit down beside." One of the great philosophical differences between doing an assessment and an evaluation, is that an assessment is a tool which encourages continued growth rather than simply judging a completed task. The assessment tool should be able to help students see where they are strong and where they can improve. And by using the these tools while the project is being completed rather than simply when it is completed, such growth and improvement can be actively encouraged.

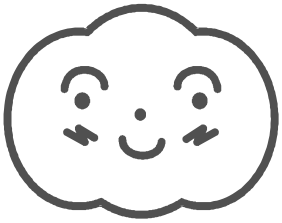
6) Use multiple assessors. The best checklists I've seen have places for input from multiple sources. The teacher, of course, should comment whether a quality indicator has been met, as should the student. The media specialist can add his or her own unique perspective. Parents should be given the opportunity to review with their children the progress of their work. And in special cases, experts in either the subject of the research or the use of the media can provide insights unavailable elsewhere.

7) Revise your tools each time they are used. No assessment instrument is perfect the first time it is used. Criteria can be unclear. Too many indicators might restrict creativity or originality. We have found and eliminated nearly all uses of superlatives (good, better, best) in creating rubrics.. The terms are empty without precise descriptors of what actually makes something "better" than something only "good." Keep your assessment tools in digital format, a word processing document or database, for easy updating and reuse.

The more experience we as educators get in articulating what we hope to get, the better chance we have of getting it. Remember Johnson's Law of Assessment: You'll only get what you want if you can describe what you want. And that applies to both Christmas ties and student performance.

Performance checklist (2nd grade) for:

Temperature Graph for Climate in Mexico City



_____ My graph has a title

_____ My grid is set up correctly

_____ The numbers are easy to read and evenly spaced

_____ Points are plotted correctly on the grid

_____ Temperatures are written correctly

_____ Lines are straight and connect the points

_____ I have plotted 3 full weeks of temperatures

Your Multimedia Presentation Should Include the Following

Content:

☐ ☐ ☐ 1. In large bold print, label your presentation with both the location and the years. Also, provide clues that locate your picture in time. For example show:

☐ ☐ ☐ a) proper clothing
☐ ☐ ☐ b) correct transportation
☐ ☐ ☐ c) tools and weapons
☐ ☐ ☐ d) people doing their daily work

☐ ☐ ☐ 2. Draw pictures of the key events. What happened in your area that was so important that we're still studying it today?

3. Include pictures of the main geographical features.

☐ ☐ ☐ a) rivers, oceans, lakes
☐ ☐ ☐ b) forests, deserts
☐ ☐ ☐ c) mountains, canyons

4. Include symbols that were important to the people in your region.

☐ ☐ ☐ a) religious symbols
☐ ☐ ☐ b) job-related symbols
☐ ☐ ☐ c) celebration or holiday symbols

☐ ☐ ☐ 5. Include important or famous people.

☐ ☐ ☐ 6. Include important or famous sayings or documents.

7. Source of all information given.

Format:

☐ ☐ ☐ 8. A minimum of eight cards, each with a uniform background and layout style.

9. Easily seen and understood navigation buttons.

☐ ☐ ☐ 10. A logical organization and structure for the stack.

11. Readable text.

☐ ☐ ☐ 12. Clear graphics.

13. Sounds and movies used to add to the understanding of the topic.

Check off each box as you complete the items listed. After you have finished your stack, indicate your region and sign your names below.

Region or Colony _____

_____ (student) _____ (student)

_____ (student) _____ (student)

If this is a presentation, what quality criteria are missing?

School Library Media Leadership- LME 631

ON-LINE SYLLABUS - Learning Plan Checklist

In cooperation with your learning group, please evaluate your work in the class and determine a final grade for yourself. I will provide you with a checklist which will help you do this. The final grade will be of your own calculation.

The starred items* must be turned in for review along with a rubric assessment tool for* one *of them.

I have met the course objectives by completing the following activities:

_____ Attending classes, actively participating in group discussions, and staying awake during lectures. Obtaining notes from classes missed. Communicating with telementor on weekly basis. Reading and discussing assigned articles in *The Indispensable Librarian* and *The Seven Habits*. (15 pts)

_____ Reading and annotating journal articles related to class discussions from a wide variety of current publications. (5 pts)

_____ Actively participating in the Covey activity with your learning group and helping complete group paper* on Covey. (5 pts)

_____ Facility floor plan and site visit report*. (5 pts)

_____ Actively participating in the board presentation with your learning group. Board presentation handouts*. (5 pts)

_____ Submitting a 1-2 page reaction paper* to class including an assessment of the telementoring experiment (5 pts)

Demonstrated use of:

_____ Spreadsheet in budgeting* (2 pt)

_____ Word processor for reaction paper (2 pt)

_____ Presentation software for board report (2 pt)

_____ Completing webpages* for online policy manual (4 pt)

Name: _____

Final Grade: _____ (50 total points possible - 40-50 A, 30-39 B)

This form needs to be turned in to me the last night of class. Keep a photocopy for your records.

Page created March 22, 1998. Page last updated December 27, 2002.

URL: http://www.doug-johnson.com/lme631/LME631assessment.htm

For questions or comments please contact Doug Johnson at johnsd9@mail.mankato.msus.edu

Return to LME631 Home page.

Sample Teacher Technology Proficiency Rubrics

Beginning

II. File management

Level 1 I do not save any documents I create using the computer.

Level 2 I save documents I've created but I cannot chose where they are saved. I do not back-up my files.

Level 3 I have a filing system for organizing my files, and can locate files quickly and reliably. I back-up my files to floppy disk or other storage device on a regular basis.

Level 4 I regularly run a disk-optimizer on my hard drive, and use a back-up program to make copies of my files on a weekly basis. I have a system for archiving files which I do not need on a regular basis to conserve my computer's hard drive space.

III. Word processing

Level 1 I do not use a word processor, nor can I identify any uses or features it might have which would benefit the way I work.

Level 2 I occasionally use the word processor for simple documents which I know I will modify and use again. I generally find it easier to hand write or type most written work I do.

Level 3 I use the word processor for nearly all my written professional work: memos, tests, worksheets, and home communication. I can edit, spell check, and change the format of a document. I can paginate, preview and print my work. I feel my work looks professional.

Level 4 I use the word processor not only for my work, but have used it with students to help them improve their own communication skills.

Internet

III. The World Wide Web

Level 1 I do not use the World Wide Web.

Level 2 I am aware that the World Wide Web is a means of sharing information on the Internet. I can browse the Web for recreational purposes.

Level 3 I can use a Web browser like *Explorer* or *Netscape* to find information on the World Wide Web, and can list some of the Web's unique features. I can explain the terms: hypertext, URL, http, and html. I can write URLs to share information locations with others. I can use Web search engines to locate subject specific information and can create bookmarks to Web sites of educational value.

Level 4 I can configure my web browser with a variety of helper applications. I understand what "cookies" do and whether to keep them enabled. I can speak to the security issues of on-line commerce and data privacy.

IV. Search tools

Level 1 I cannot locate any information on the Internet.

Level 2 I can occasionally locate useful information on the Internet by browsing or through remembered sources.

Level 3 I can conduct an efficient search of Internet resources using directories likeYahoo or search engines like Excite, Lycos,or Infoseek. I can use advanced search commands to specify and limited the number of hits I get. I can state some guidelines for evaluating the information I find on the Internet and can write a bibliographic citation for information found.

Level 4 I can identify some specialized search tools for finding software and email addresses. I can speculate on future developments in on-line information searching including know-bots and other kinds of intelligent search agents.

Advanced

IV. Information literacy skills - primary sources

Level 1 When asking students to do research, I expect them to only use secondary resources like books, magazines, or reference materials.

Level 2 As a part of my curriculum, I have some units which require the collection and use of original data. I generally can predict the outcome of such experiments.

Level 3 My curriculum includes at least two information literacy projects that require the collection of original data to answer a genuine question. I may use tools to collect data like computerized probes and sensors, on-line surveys, interviews, or digitized sources of historical records, as well as tools to record, organize, and communicate the data such databases and spreadsheets.

Level 4 I am actively involved in curriculum planning teams and advocate for multidisciplinary units and activities which require information literacy skills. I share successful units with others through print and electronic publishing and through conference presentations and workshops.

V. Modification of instructional delivery

Level 1 I have one or two effective methods of delivering content to my students. I do not use technology that requires that I change my instructional methodology.

Level 2 I have tried units or projects that are student-directed, use small groups, or are highly individualized, but I primarily use teacher-directed, whole group instruction.

Level 3 I use a variety of instructional delivery methods and student grouping strategies routinely throughout the year. I can design activities and approaches that both best fit the learning objectives and the availability of the technology available to me. I can use small groups working cooperatively or in rotation to take advantage of student to equipment ratios of greater than one to one.

Level 4 I continuously try new approaches suggested by research or observation to discover the most effective means of using technology to engage my students and meet curricular goals. I work with a team of fellow teachers to create, modify and improve my practices in this area.

Sample Student Technology Rubrics from Bellingham, Washington

Elementary	Middle	High School
2. File Management ___Level 1 - I do not save any documents I create using the computer. ___Level 2 - I select, open and save documents on different drives. ___Level 3 - I create my own folders to keep files organized. ___Level 4 - I move files between folders and drives.	**2. File Management** ___Level 1 - I do not save any documents I create using the computer. ___Level 2 - I select, open and save documents on different drives. ___Level 3 - I create my own folders to keep files organized and maintain my account within allotted district limits. ___Level 4 - I move files between folders and drives.	**2. File Management** ___Level 1 - I do not save any documents I create using the computer. ___Level 2 - I select, open and save documents on different drives. ___Level 3 - I create my own folders to keep files organized and maintain my account within allotted district limits. ___Level 4 - I move files between folders and drives.
3. Word Processing ___Level 1 - I do not use a word processor. ___Level 2 - I use a word processor for basic writing tasks. ___Level 3 - I use the tools of the word processor, such as spell check and grammar check to edit my work. ___Level 4 - I use the word processor to improve my previous drafts and publish a final document.	**3. Word Processing** ___Level 1 - I do not use a word processor. ___Level 2 - I use a word processor for basic writing tasks. ___Level 3 - I use the tools of the word processor, such as spell check and grammar check to edit my work. ___Level 4 - I use the word processor to improve my previous drafts and publish a final document.	**3. Word Processing** ___Level 1 - I do not use a word processor. ___Level 2 - I use a word processor for basic writing tasks. ___Level 3 - I use the tools of the word processor, such as spell check and grammar check to edit my work. ___Level 4 - I use the word processor to improve my previous drafts and publish a final document.

Program Assessment Rubrics from *Standards for Minnesota School Library Programs*

Part One. Learning and Teaching	Minimum	Standard	Exemplary
1.Is the program essential and fully integrated?	25-50% of classes use the media program's materials and services the equivalent of at least once each semester.	50%-100% of classes use the media program's materials and services the equivalent of at least once each semester. The media specialist is a regular member of curriculum teams. All media skills are taught through content-based projects.	50%-100% of classes use the media program's materials and services the equivalent of at least twice each semester. Information literacy skills are an articulated component of a majority of content area curricula.
2.Are the information literacy standards integral to the curriculum?	Students complete at least two resource-based projects each year that require research skills.	Students complete all resource-based projects required by the Graduation Rule's High Standards There are a clear set of media and technology benchmarks for each grade level.	All classroom projects have both content and information literacy outcomes.
3.Does the media program model and promote collaborative planning and teaching?	The media specialist has a schedule that allows meeting with teachers prior to each research units. The media center contains a professional collection.	The media specialist has a schedule that allows meeting with teachers on a regular basis to plan resource-based projects. The media specialist is a member of grade level or team planning groups. The media specialist has defined responsibilities for teaching skills in each project.	The media specialist participates in the assessment and grading of student projects with all staff. The media specialist is viewed as a resource for authentic assessment and project-based learning.
4.Is there access to a full range of information resources and services?	The media specialist is knowledgeable about and acquires some resources in print and non-print formats. The media specialist assists students and staff in gathering data from electronic resources.	The media specialist evaluates, acquires, and promotes resources in print and non-print formats. The media specialist helps staff and students access other community resources.	The media specialist participates in resource and service sharing with other community agencies.
5.Does the media program encourage reading, viewing and listening?	The media center contains current materials of student interest in print format. The media specialist promotes materials on a regular basis.	The media center contains current materials of high student interest in a variety of formats. A formal program to encourage student reading, viewing and listening is in place.	The media program conducts events and activities that encourage independent reading. A computerized book-tracking system is available. Activities that promote media literacy are held.

See bibliography for URL of complete guidelines

Additional Resources:

Andrade, Heidi. **"Using Rubrics to Promote Thinking and Learning."** *Educational Leadership*, February 2000.
Bellingham Washington **(Student)Technology Assessment Resources.** <http://www.bham.wednet.edu/assess2.htm>
Dohnam, Jean. ***Assessment of Information Processes & Products.*** Follett Professional Development Series. <http://www.fsc.follett.com> or 800-323-3397
Donham, Jean. *Enhancing* Teaching and Learning: A Leadership Guide for School Library Media Specialists. Neal-Schuman, 1998.
Johnson, Doug. **"A 12 Point Library/Media Checklist for Adminstrators"** from *The Indispensable Librarian*. Linworth, 1997. or on-line at <www.doug-johnson.com>.
Johnson, Doug. ***The Indispensable Teacher's Guide to Computer Skills: A Staff Development Guide 2nd ed..*** Linworth, 2002.
Minnesota Educational Media Organization. ***Standards for Minnesota School Library Programs.*** <www.memoweb.org>
NWREL Assessement Toolkit.< http://www.nwrel.org/eval/toolkit98/index.html>
Simkins, Michael. "**Designing Great Rubrics**." Technology & Learning, August 1999.

Online
Kathy Schrock's Assessment Page: http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/assess.html
RubiStar rubric generator: http://rubistar.4teachers.org/

Activity

Qualities of _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11 _____
12. _____

Level One

_____
_____
_____

Level Two

_____
_____
_____

Level Three

_____
_____
_____

Something to think about: My job as teacher is not to assess your work, but to teach YOU to assess your own work. I will only help you evaluate the quality of the tools you use to improve your own efforts. That way you will continue to grow long after the class is over. Doug

Mouse Trap Cars!!!!!

Preliminary Run Date _____ **Final Run Date** _____

Task: Construct a vehicle that is powered entirely by a mouse trap with the goal of traveling the greatest distance possible.

Qualifying Specifications:

- You must use the mousetrap provided in class.
- All force to move the vehicle must come from the spring in the mousetrap. (Example – the mousetrap cannot be used to turn on an electric motor to power the wheels.)
- The spring cannot be re-wound to change the pushing force.
- The vehicle may not be attached to the walls, floor, ceiling, etc..
- The mousetrap must move with the vehicle.
- All vehicles will be started against a vertical wall and started by setting off the mousetrap.
- Distance will be measured from the starting line to the rear-most part of the vehicle.
- Additional mousetraps are available to purchase for $.50 each.

Evaluation: This project is worth 50 lab points.

20 pts for DISTANCE TRAVELED

Points	0	5	10	15	20
Meters	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5

* 1 bonus point for each 5m after the first 5m!!!

10 pts WRITTEN DESCRIPTION of how the mousetrap provides the energy to move the vehicle. Describe the use of simple machines in the operation of the vehicle.

10 pts ORAL PRESENTATION of your basic design, how you got your idea, and how your idea changed, and how you expect your vehicle to perform in the final run.

10 pts SKETCH of the vehicle illustrating how it functions. In the sketch indicate all simple machines present.

* Written descroption and sketch are due when you give your presentation

Sample assessment tool used by West High School Science Department, Mankato Area Public Schools

Evaluation Sheet:

Name(s) _____

_____

Period _____

10 points	7 points	4 points	0 points
Written Description: Clear, organized and understandable. Includes accurate information concerning energy transfer, kinetic energy, and potential energy. Describes types of machines used, mechanical advantage, effort forces, and resistance forces.	Somewhat disorganized, hard to understand, inaccurate, and missin some important information.	Disorganized, hard to understand, and inaccurate.	Missing
Oral Presentation: Clearly and completely describes the basic design of your vehicle. Includes how your plan may have changed during the building process, where your plan came from, and how your expectations for how it will perform in the final run.	Somewhat rushed, unclear, and missing some of the basic information.	Very rushed, unclear, and missing much of the basic information.	Missing
SKETCH: Very easy to read, well organized and accurately includes each type of machine, Force in, Force out, Effort, Resistance, and MA. Illustrates how the vehicle works	Somewhat messy, hard to read, disorganized, and missing some important information.	Very messy, hard to read, and missing much of the important information.	Missing

Distance Traveled

Points	0	5	10	15	20
Meters	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5

* bonus points (1 for each 5m after the first 5m) _____

Total Score: _____

Aggregated assessment of skills for board report (partial)

Find below a summary of this year's measurement of the information literacy skills gained by our 1st through 6th grade students through the completion of the research/technology projects and other teaching done by our building media specialists.

Some observations:

1. Students in grades 1-6 at each elementary building were assessed in four basic skills areas by benchmarked district-wide criteria.
2. Of the assessed students, a very high percentage (98%) met or exceeded benchmark expectations.
3. The media specialist had primary responsibility for the assessment of these skills, although the teaching responsibility was shared with the classroom teacher.
4. Other evaluation tools used by the district do **not** measure skill attainment in many, if not most, of these areas.
5. Parents and other community members can be assured by these assessments that students in the Mankato Schools are all gaining a core set of research, technology, independent reading, and appropriate use (ethical) skills.

Challenges:

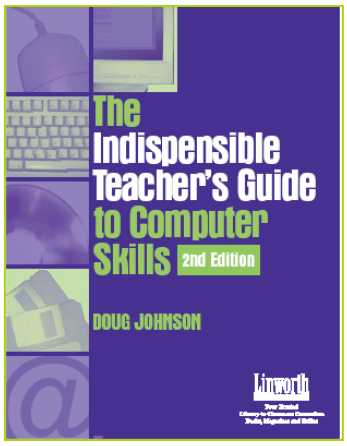
1. We need to determine if common evaluation tools are being used district-wide for each project, and discuss to what degree minimum criteria for reaching the benchmark standards is shared among all media specialists.
2. We need to find ways to keep the information literacy and technology curriculum integrated into the regular classroom curriculum on an on-going basis as the content areas change.
3. We need to make sure these projects fully meet the stare standards.
4. We need to discuss whether the benchmark skills are appropriate and sufficiently rigorous.
5. We need to determine whether the current fixed schedule of students coming to the media center for 50 minutes each week works for or against student skill attainment. We also need to determine whether the current amount of media staff is adequate to do a complete and accurate job of teaching and assessing all skills.

I am pleased with this first year effort on the part of both the media professionals and classroom teachers in the district. This project serves as a model for how we might demonstrate student learning and school effectiveness beyond relying solely on standardized test scores.

ISD77 Media Skills Benchmark Attainment

	Total students	Research-N	Research-M	Research-E	Research-N/A		LL Read - N	LL Read - M	LL Read -E	LL Read - N/A	Tech -N	Tech -M	Tech -E	Tech -N/A
1 - EL	34	0	34	0	0		0	34	0	0	0	34	0	0
1 - F	70	0	70	0	0		0	70	0	0	0	70	0	0
1 - H	66	0	64	0	2		0	64	0	2	0	64	0	2
1 - J	30	0	29	0	1		1	26	2	1	1	28	0	1
1 - K	71	0	69	0	2		1	67	0	3	0	69	0	2
1 - M	105	0	105	0	0		0	105	0	0	0	105	0	0
1 - R	59	0	57	0	2		0	57	0	2	0	57	0	2
1 - W	69	3	66	0	0		0	69	0	0	2	67	0	0
Total	**504**	**3**	**494**	**0**	**7**		**2**	**492**	**2**	**8**	**3**	**494**	**0**	**7**
%	**100%**	**1%**	**98%**	**0%**	**1%**		**0%**	**98%**	**0%**	**2%**	**1%**	**98%**	**0%**	**1%**
2 - EL	46	0	46	0	0		0	46	0	0	0	46	0	0
2 - F	71	0	70	0	1		0	68	0	3	0	71	0	0
2 - H	90	0	88	0	2		0	88	0	2	0	88	0	2
2 - J	50	1	48	0	1		1	47	1	1	2	47	0	1
2 - K	79	0	77	0	2		0	72	0	7	0	78	0	1
2 - M	88	0	88	0	0		0	88	0	0	0	88	0	0
2 - R	61	1	60	0	0		1	46	14	0	1	57	3	0
2 - W	68	*0*	*0*	*0*	*68*		1	67	0	0	4	63	0	1
Total	**553**	**2**	**477**	**0**	**74**		**3**	**522**	**15**	**13**	**7**	**538**	**3**	**5**
%	**100%**	**0%**	**86%**	**0%**	**13%**		**1%**	**94%**	**3%**	**2%**	**1%**	**97%**	**1%**	**1%**

Three *Indispensable* Titles for the Information Age! By Doug Johnson



The Indispensable Teacher's Guide to Computer Skills *Second Edition*

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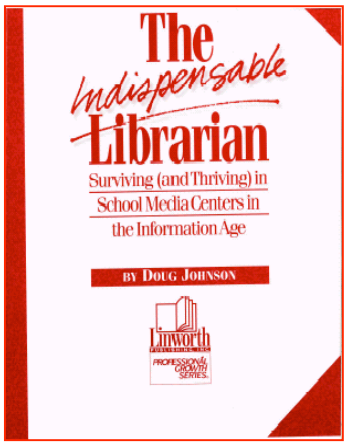
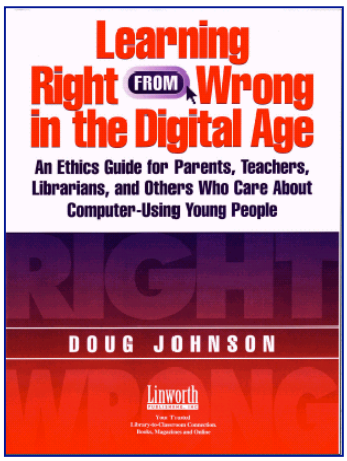


Learning Right from Wrong in the Digital Age:

An Ethics Guide for Parents, Teachers, Librarians, and Others Who Care About Computer-Using Young People

This guide answers all the questions about making the right choices in cyberspace for a generation of students, parents and educators who live in the digital world! ISBN 1-58683-131-3; 175 pages; $44.95 (NOW $36.00!)



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Phone #_____ Email:_____

School: _____

Address:_____

_____

_____

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