Teaching MLA Citation Format Using an Open Source Web Based Drag and Drop Activity

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Available at: https://works.bepress.com/eric_kowalik/6/
Drag and Drop Citation Activity (go.mu.edu/english1001-cites)

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Project Background

When discussing citing and citation formats, students’ eyes begin to glaze over and they tune out what is said.

In an effort to make citations more scintillating, librarians at Raynor Memorial Libraries created a web-based drag and drop activity that allows students to see which parts of actual online publications are needed to create an MLA citation.

How it Was Used

This activity was used at the beginning of the one-shot information literacy class that is part all 80 sections of English 1001, a course taken by almost every incoming Freshmen.

In addition to providing an activity that would help students transition into an academic mindset, the activity also foreshadowed material to be covered in the session such as publication types.

By using real online publications, it demonstrated to students what and where to look for the elements of information they need to complete an MLA citation.

Get the Code and Contribute

MLA citation not your style? No problem, the source code for this project was released under a GNU General Public License and can be downloaded for free from the Raynor Memorial Libraries GitHub site:

github.com/MarquetteRML/MLA-citation-drag-and-drop

The code is HTML and jQuery, no proprietary software is needed to edit the code, just fire up a text editor and view the code comments to easily customize the tutorial or change the citation format to APA, Turabian, etc. Just remember to add your customized version to the GitHub site so others can benefit too!

Need help getting the code up and running? Feel free to contact us at eric.kowalik@marquette.edu or valerie.beech@marquette.edu

How it Works

1. Students are shown a snippet of a real online publication with the necessary citation pieces highlighted by a dashed yellow border. Students must drag each piece to its appropriate field on the right side of the page.

2. After placing the various citation pieces in a box on the right-hand side of the page, the student clicks the Check Work button and the pieces move to the correct field locations, allowing the student to see what pieces they placed correctly or incorrectly.

3. Clicking the Check Work button also reveals a lower section that shows the correct MLA style cite for the item and asks students to identify the publication type of the item. The student is given feedback on their choice and directed to the next citation item.