Desmarais Partner Lesson

There were many nice features in this lesson. The subject was good, the material was good, objectives were clear (though hard to find), and the general process to complete the assignment was generally clear as well. However, several elements were difficult to locate, missing, or unclear. The problem areas are in red below.

Partner Cooperation & Facilitation: 95%

Nick said the following about you:

I thought my partner’s lesson was very well thought out and very detailed. Paul Desmarais’s lesson used my interests in Biology to have me complete a project using Diatoms. The project was creating a storyboard for a multimedia presentation. This was also something that I was very interested in. Paul had a great introductory video explaining what the lesson was about and about storyboards in general. His four objectives were met in the lesson and I felt like I learned or completed all four objectives.

The most impressive part was his script, images, and examples that he had complied and made usable for the learner. I found it very helpful in completing the assignment.

For future growth, Paul should make sure his lesson hits all learners. I think some questions could come up from some students about what exactly he wanted in the storyboard. Completely thinking through the lesson and anticipating questions always helps. Paul is an extremely talented and intellectual person and sometimes this creates a communication separation between student and teacher.

I’m deducting points because the survey and deployment of the lesson were late. I know you ran into quite a few problems, so this will not be a significant deduction.

Design of Effective Online Instruction: 85%

Blackboard lesson requirements:

- Introductory/welcome announcement telling learner where to start
- Teacher/staff information
- Lesson objectives
- Lesson title: Create a Storyboard for a Multimedia lesson
- Assignment
- Discussion boards, etc., if needed.
- When assignment is due and how to submit. **Not except in the gradebook itself. This needs to be explicitly stated in the assignment.**
- Gradebook setup with the learner’s name.
- Delete unused navigation buttons.
Submitted by 7/16/09. Survey and lesson availability were late, but have already been addressed in partner section so are not factored into grading here.

Objectives. I found these under “Course Information,” but it took some searching. There are no clear directions in the assignment or announcement about how to find them. Objectives are clearly stated in terms of student learning.

Alignment. Activities are aligned with objectives. Assessment appears to be, but it isn’t spelled out clearly anywhere.

Technical. The diaromchart.indd file is a format must be opened in Adobe InDesign, which is not specified as required software for the lesson. Convert documents like this to a common format, such as PDF.

Spelling/typos. There are several in the script document, but I’m not deducting points for typos since I didn't specify that in the rubric.

Graphic Design of Lesson: 50%

Contrast. No chunking through use of different sized headings or other CARP principles.

Alignment. Left-aligned and clean.

Repetition. Well, one orange text color was repeated once on a different page; but other than that, no visual elements unified the lesson visually.

Proximity. There were no proximity problems since there were no headings to chunk material.

Usability
Usability was not specified in the grading rubric, so I’m including usability issues as a recommendation instead of as part of the grading.

• I’ve already covered the problem of the Adobe InDesign document.
• The script document should also be available as a webpage so it can be accessed online.
• Links on assignment page were not clickable. Links should be hyperlinked. The linking tool is not available in Safari, but it is in Firefox. If you work with Blackboard in the future, I’d recommend using the Firefox browser for editing.

Recommendations
The tutorial was beautiful—very professional and well done. However, some basic lesson elements were missing. The advice we give to Boise State teachers who are designing new online courses is: engine first; chrome later. Start with a clear plan and make that transparent to students. Three basic elements that should be obvious to learners are:

• Objectives
• Activities (including Readings, if any)
• Assessment

If you link to required readings as well as extra resources, make clear what is required and what is optional.