



**Essential Question:** What makes a website the right site for me?

## Learning Overview and Objectives

*Overview:* Students explore and evaluate an informational website for children. They discover that people’s opinions about the quality and usefulness of a site will vary.

As a class, students view a website and identify features that they like and those they do not like. Using the **Rate My Site Student Handout**, they then explore and rate another site on their own. Students compare responses and discuss their similarities and differences.

### objectives

*Students will:*

- Identify and explore different features of an informational website
- Understand that not everyone will rate a website the same way
- Evaluate whether they like or dislike features of a site

## Materials and Preparation

*Materials*

- **Rate My Site Student Handout**
- Crayons or markers

**Estimated time:** 45 minutes

*Preparation*

- Copy the **Rate My Site Student Handout**, one for every student
- Review the sites listed in Teach 1

*Parent Resources*

- Send parents the **Research and Evaluation for Elementary Students Tip Sheet**

## Key Vocabulary

- **Subject:** The topic that something (a website, book, or video) is about
- **Link (noun):** Something you can click on to go to another part of the site
- **Rate:** To judge how good or valuable something is

## teaching plans

### Introduce

**INVITE** students to think about something they have all seen – for example, the color of the walls in your classroom.

**ASK** *Do you like the color of the walls?* (Have children raise their hands to answer “yes” or “no.”)

Next, invite children to think about a book or video you have viewed as a class, and ask them whether or not they liked it. Then do the same for a place you have visited on a field trip.



**POINT OUT** to students that different people can have different ideas about what colors, books, videos, and places they like. They can also have different ideas about what they like when it comes to books, movies, or even websites.

## Teach 1: Explore Likes and Dislikes of a Website

**CHOOSE** one of the following sites to explore as a class. Have students go to the site, or project the site onto a screen for students to view together.

**Census in Schools:** [www.census.gov/schools/census\\_for\\_kids](http://www.census.gov/schools/census_for_kids)

**Clifford the Big Red Dog:** [www.pbskids.org/clifford](http://www.pbskids.org/clifford)

**Color with Leo:** [www.colorwithleo.com](http://www.colorwithleo.com)

**Curious George:** [www.pbskids.org/curiousgeorge](http://www.pbskids.org/curiousgeorge)

**Julia's Rainbow Corner:** [www.juliasrainbowcorner.com](http://www.juliasrainbowcorner.com)

**Molecularium:** [www.molecularium.com/kidsite.html](http://www.molecularium.com/kidsite.html)

**Starfall:** [www.starfall.com](http://www.starfall.com)

**Seussville:** [www.seussville.com](http://www.seussville.com)

**U.S. Mint for Kids:** [www.usmint.gov/kids](http://www.usmint.gov/kids)

**DEFINE** the Key Vocabulary word **subject**. Then ask students to describe the subject of the website they are looking at.

**INVITE** volunteers to name things they like or do not like about the site. Be sure that students visit many links on the site, not just the games sections. You may use the following questions to encourage student responses.

### ASK

- *Do you like the subject of the site?*
- *Do you like the way the site looks? What about the colors and the pictures?*
- *Do you understand the site? How does your answer make you feel about the site?*

**ENCOURAGE** students to observe that not everyone likes the same things about the website.

**DEFINE** the Key Vocabulary word **link**, and click on some links on the website. Explain to students that once in a while the **links** on a website don't work. Ask students how this might make them feel about the site. Would it change how much they like it? Links can also take them to another website. Would this change how they feel about the site?

## Teach 2: Rate a Website

**ARRANGE** students in pairs. If your classroom has a limited number of computers, students may work in larger groups.

**ASSIGN** each pair or group one of the websites listed in Teach 1.

**DISTRIBUTE** copies of the **Rate My Site Student Handout**, one for every student.



**DEFINE** the Key Vocabulary word **rate**. Tell students they will be using the handout to **rate** another website by recording what they like and what they do not like about the site.

**EXPLAIN** that for each question on their handouts, students should color the happy face if their answer is “yes” and color the sad face if their answer is “no.”

**INVITE** students to explore their sites and complete their handouts. While pairs or groups can explore websites together, each student should fill in his or her own handout, expressing his or her own personal likes and dislikes.

The following prompts may help students respond to each question.

- *Do you like the subject?* (Ask students to identify the main subject of the website. Ask them whether the subject is something they are interested in and would like to learn more about.)
- *Do you like the pictures?* (Ask students whether they like the style and colors of the pictures. Also ask them whether the pictures are fun or interesting to look at, and provide them with information about the subject.)
- *Are there fun things to do?* (Encourage students to click on different parts of the site and look for activities to try and fun things to look at.)
- *Do the links work?* (As they click on different parts of the site, have students note whether all the links work.)
- *Will you visit again?* (Ask students to decide if this is a site they would like to come back to, on their own or with friends or family members.)

**INSTRUCT** students to add up the number of happy and sad faces they gave their site. Have group members compare their totals.

**DISCUSS** with the class why different people may have come up with different totals. Students should understand that different people are interested in different **subjects**, and they might like different kinds of pictures and different activities. They should also recognize that most people like to be able to read the words and use all of the **links** on a website.

## Wrap Up and Assess

You can use these questions to assess your students’ understanding of the lesson objectives.

### ASK

*How can you tell whether a website is a good site for you?* (Students should recognize that they can **rate** a site based on questions like the ones on their handouts. If they answered “yes” to all or most of the questions, the site is a good one for them.)

*What are some things that make a site good for you?* (Students should be able to name several criteria that help determine whether or not they like a site, including whether they like the subject and the pictures, whether they can read and understand the words on the site, and whether they find fun things to do on the site.)

*Will everyone answer the questions the same way? Why or why not?* (People will probably have different answers to at least some of the questions, because not everyone likes the same things.)



## Extension Activity

Distribute additional copies of the **Rate My Site Student Handout**. Have students cross out “Site” in the handout title and replace it with “Book.” Explain to students that they will be using the handout to rate a book. Some of the questions on the handout can be used to rate the book, just as they were used to rate a website. Other questions may not work, because a book is different from a site. (Have students discuss hardcopy books rather than e-books or online books.)

Read the book as a class (it can be a book you have already read). After reading through the book together, have students work as a class or in groups to study their handouts and decide which questions can be used to rate a book, and which questions do not work. (Students should recognize that the questions about activities and links do not apply to a book the way they do to a website.) Have them cross out those questions.

Challenge students to replace the crossed-out questions with new questions that will help them rate the book. Encourage them to think about some things a book has that make it different from a website. (Students may suggest questions about whether they like the book’s cover, story, or characters.) Have them write the new questions on their handouts. Then have them complete the handouts, and compare and contrast their answers with those of their classmates.



## Homework

Give each student two additional copies of the **Rate My Site Student Handout** to take home. Ask students to work with a parent or other family member to rate two additional websites that they’ve never visited before. One website should be chosen by the student; the other should be chosen by their family member. After they have completed the homework activity, invite students to discuss how their ratings compared to those of their family member.

### Alignment with Standards – National Educational Technology Standards for Students® 2007

(Source: International Society for Technology in Education, 2007)

#### 3. Research and Information Fluency

- plan strategies to guide inquiry
- locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media
- evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness of specific tasks.
- process data and report results

#### 4. Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making

- collect and analyze data to identify solutions and/or make informed decisions

#### 5. Digital Citizenship

- advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology
- exhibit a positive attitude toward using technology that supports collaboration, learning, and productivity

Common Sense Media is an independent, nonprofit resource that helps families and educators teach kids how to be safe and smart in today’s 24/7 media world. Go to [www.commonsensemedia.org](http://www.commonsensemedia.org) for thousands of reviews and expert advice.





# Rate My Site



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Website \_\_\_\_\_

## Directions

Color the happy face for YES. Color the sad face for NO.

Do you like the subject?



\_\_\_\_\_

Do you like the pictures?



\_\_\_\_\_

Are there fun things to do?



\_\_\_\_\_

Do the links work?



\_\_\_\_\_

Do you like the site?



\_\_\_\_\_

Will you visit again?



\_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL

