Round 1 Testing for New Holly Lisle Writing School Website: 39 Volunteers Requested Now

written by Holly
September 9, 2015
By Holly Lisle

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WebinarJam has crashed every time but one on this, with people unable to reach rooms I'm in. I've checked my links, I've checked their links, and at this point, the only thing I can do to stop wasting people's time is give up.

I'm going to see if there's some way to do this same process with Skype. I'll set the testing back up again if there is.

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~~Today (Wednesday, September 9th) and tomorrow (Thursday, September 10th), I'm going to be doing what's called "Paper Testing" to find usability problems with the interface the new writing school site (**HollyLisleOnlineWritingSchool.com**, or **HLOWS.com** for short).~~

I need a maximum of **39** volunteers (already have one) for one-on-one testing with me in a video chat room.

Paper Testing is fun, and it will take each volunteer about fifteen minutes WORST case.

Here's how it works. I have five scripts prepared. They start

with things like, “You’re a first-time visitor to the site. Find something that interests you, and tell me why.”

Or, “You’re already a member. Log in.”

Here are the instructions for doing a usability test:

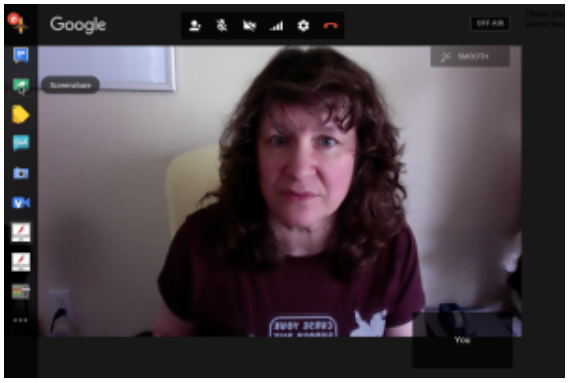
Paper Test #1 for HLOWS.com

How To Do Your Usability Test

At the scheduled time, log into the web chat link I’ll send you.

Make sure I’m already in chat with you. (Have your microphone on, and say “Hi.” □ You’ll be coming in as a presenter, and I might hear you before I see you.)

Find the screenshare button on the left, where I’ve highlighted it. Image below.



Screenshare button on left sidebar

To help me test, all you have to do is talk while you work your way through the instructions I give you by clicking the places on the drawings where you think the necessary actions SHOULD take place, describing what you’re trying and what you think your action will accomplish.

When you complete one instruction, I'll give you the next task. There are a MAXIMUM of six tasks in each test, and the whole test will take no more than about fifteen minutes if I've done a terrible job of laying out the site.

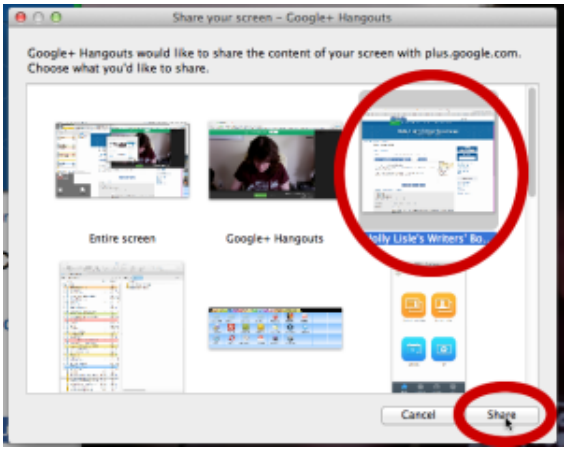
You do not need to hurry. **If you make mistakes, me seeing them happen will help me figure out where I've made mistakes in the design. Your mistakes will make the final site better.**

Take your time, think out loud, and let me know every time something doesn't make sense to you or you cannot figure out or find a way to accomplish the instruction on your script.

Here's what you'll need to volunteer:

- **A microphone or mic headset that works with your computer**, or a built-in mic that you know has good volume.
- **The Chrome web browser and a Gmail email address.Reply to this post with your Gmail address** because that's the only way I can make you a presenter in the web app, and you must be a presenter to share your screen. You'll need Chrome because the controls I show above won't work if you're not using Chrome.I'll also use this address to schedule our session with you.
- A second browser that ISN'T Chrome. You'll be using that browser to share your screen. The Paper Test is very low tech, but does require that your browser process images.

This WILL NOT WORK with a cell phone because of the primitive nature of the test.When you have your second browser opened, you'll click the screenshare button, highlight that browser,



Select your OTHER browser…

and click the share button.

- About fifteen minutes that you can block out of an hour or so of availability. If you post your response here and let me know today or tomorrow, and the time you could be available (any one-hour block from which I can pull 15 minutes, or something cool like "anytime between 10 AM and 3PM" will work, I'll set up a schedule with testing times and mail each volunteer with your fifteen-minute block, along with the login details. (The fifteen-minute block starting at noon tomorrow is already taken, but as I write this, everything else is wide open.
- I will be saving the screen test as a video, and Dan, the moderator, and I will be going over all of them looking for places where my initial design causes problems, and where we can make things better and easier to use, so if you volunteer, you automatically agree that I can save and use the video of your test.

Let me know you can help by posting your availability times below. NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY—if you can use your web browser, you can do this.

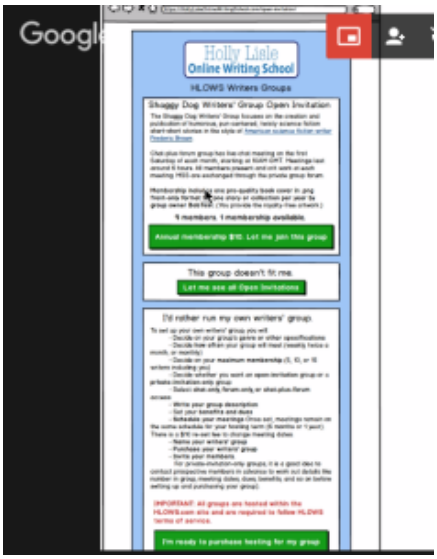
I'll give you the URL for the papertest site once you arrive and have your screenshare browser set up.

I'll be starting testing at 10 AM this morning if I have volunteers by then, and doing as many tests as I can before 3 PM. I'll be doing the same thing on Thursday.

Thank you in advance for volunteering. I want to make sure that when we build the front end for the new site (which will NOT be what we go live with, but which will follow soon after) you'll have a site that is easy for you to use.

By the way…

This is a sneak peek of one of the test pages:



Paper-test example page

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