Usability Testing Practice

Prior to testing, read our [best usability practices](#)

Researcher(s): <who is leading the research?>

Research issue: The main goal of this usability study is to implement and practice our usability testing protocol remotely. The secondary goal is to understand how different demographics of first-time users explore our site. In addition to taking notes on the participant's experience, the facilitator should be taking notes on how smoothly the usability test goes.

Design decision(s) in question:

- *Primary*: How can we increase the frequency, reliability, and diversity of remote usability tests?
- *Secondary*: How might we improve the website to support first-time users?

Hypothesis:

- <what is your assumption(s) about this design?>

Goals:

- Make it fast and easy for anyone within the org to initiate, host, and evaluate remote usability tests
- Increase communication, accessibility, excitement and engagement with (and for) a more diverse set of users
- Create a standardized and repeatable testing method (+ best practices) to mitigate inconsistencies across tests, nervousness, or conscious/unconscious bias

Objectives:

- Find areas where we can improve our usability testing script and outline
- Practice facilitating and notetaking

- Understand how to tweak the testing protocol to match different user needs (technology, language, etc)
- Test with diverse demographics of users
- Discover which part/s of the site attracts users
- Identify difficulties in navigating the website

Questions we want to know the answers to:
1. What gaps do we have in the usability testing script and outline? Where do facilitators struggle?
2. How can we compile and archive data in an efficient and usable way?
3. What additional technology, if any, do we need to conduct these tests?
4. How can we improve communication with usability participants?
5. What additional training do facilitators and notetakers need before conducting a test?
6. How might we improve the website to support first-time users?

Participant profile:
- Teachers

Script

Introduction

Hi <Participant name>,

How are you doing today?

Thank you for taking the time to talk to us today!

My name is <Interviewer name>, and I'm a <Interviewer role> at Code.org.

[Optional:] We're also joined by <Observer name> who is a <Observer role> at Code.org. I'll be chatting with you today, and <Observer name> will be taking notes during our call.

Today I'll be asking you some questions, and then I will give you some tasks to complete on the computer. We'll use the feedback we get from you and other participants to improve the Code.org experience, so please share your honest thoughts as we go along. We understand that you aren't already familiar with our site, so there are no right or wrong answers!

Do you have any questions for me before we get started?

Before we begin, could I just confirm that you're okay sharing your screen and you're okay with this session being recorded and shared with other Code.org employees? The recording will only be used to help us figure out how to improve the website and will only be seen by the employees working on this project. It also helps us take notes.

Thank you! I will start recording now.

[PRESS RECORD]

Warm up questions

Before we jump straight to the website, I'd like to ask you a couple of quick questions.

1. What grade do you teach?
2. Where are you calling from today?
3. Do you have any favorite websites or apps?
4. What devices do you typically access these websites and apps from? (computer, tablet, phone)
5. Do you have any former experience with Code.org or similar services?
6. Does your school teach any form of computer science?

   [If yes] Have you taught the class before?

Tasks

Tasks briefing

[This part should be quickly read out loud]

Now I'm going to ask you to carry out some tasks on the computer. There are a few things to keep in mind here:

1. **We're not testing you** - we are testing the design! If you encounter difficulties, it's never your fault, and it's always the design's fault. Finding these problems is good, because it will show us where we need to make improvements.
2. **Be as candid as possible**. If you don't like something or think it's just plain stupid, please say so! You won't hurt our feelings, we want to know what you really think about the experience.
3. **Behave as naturally as possible**. (I know this can be tricky with me watching what you're doing, but still). If you get too frustrated or bored of something and you don't think you'd continue it any further if you were in this scenario in real life, please let me know.
4. Please ask me any questions you wish, but for the purposes of this test, I might not be able to answer them for you.
5. **Most importantly, please think aloud as you do this**. Share with me where you're going to click, why you're clicking there, and what you expect to see after you do so. It helps us understand what is going through your mind and allows us to take good notes. It's natural to forget to do this, so I may remind you to to think aloud during tasks.

Can you please share your screen with me?

Task 1: Scan for interesting content

Prototype link: <link>

Relevant research objective: Discover which parts of the site attract users

Scenario: You've just been told about Code.org from a friend. You are checking out the website to learn more.

Task: Please open a web browser and go to the website code.org.
I'll give you 90 seconds to scan the website and describe what stands out to you. There's no need to dive deep into any part of the website. Think out loud and call out anything that looks cool or interesting, and even things that look boring or confusing.
[There is no correct way to do this. It's just a warm-up and a chance to see where teachers go and how they search.]

Followup questions:
1. What are your first impressions of the website?
2. Which parts of the website would you like to learn more about?

[Optional:]
Predicted behavior: <describe task-related behavior you expect from participant prior to testing>

Task 2: Find the course you would teach

Prototype link: <link>

Relevant research objective: <objective>

Scenario: Let's say you're interested in teaching computer science to your class, so you need to determine which course you would teach them.

Task: Determine which course you would teach your class, and find the page that would give you more information on getting started.

Followup questions:
1. What difficulties did you have finding this page?
2. What kinds of information does the page tell you?
3. What else would you need to feel comfortable teaching this course?

[Optional:]
Predicted behavior: <describe task-related behavior you expect from participant prior to testing>

Task 3: Lead an Hour of Code event

Prototype link: <link>
Relevant research objective: How easy is it to explore and navigate the website

Scenario: You realized you don't have time to teach a full computer science course, but you still want to expose your students to computer science. You decide to try Hour of Code.

Task: Find out how to teach the Dance Party Hour of Code lesson.

Followup questions:
1. In your own words, how would you describe the Hour of Code?
2. What difficulties did you have finding this page?
3. What else would you need to feel comfortable teaching this course?

[Optional:]

Predicted behavior: <describe task-related behavior you expect from participant prior to testing>

Wrap up questions

1. ~~What is your overall impression of the website?~~
2. How does the usability of the Code.org compare to other teaching websites you have used?
3. What could have made your experience using the website better?
4. If you had the flexibility in your curriculum, how likely would you be to teach a Code.org course or Hour of Code activity to your students?
5. ~~Is there any other feedback you would like to provide?~~

These are all my questions for today. Do you have any questions for me, now that we are done?

Closing words

Thank you very much for taking the time to speak with me. We'll be sharing your thoughts with the Product team here at Code.org. We're constantly trying to improve Code.org and your input today has been really valuable.

[STOP RECORDING]