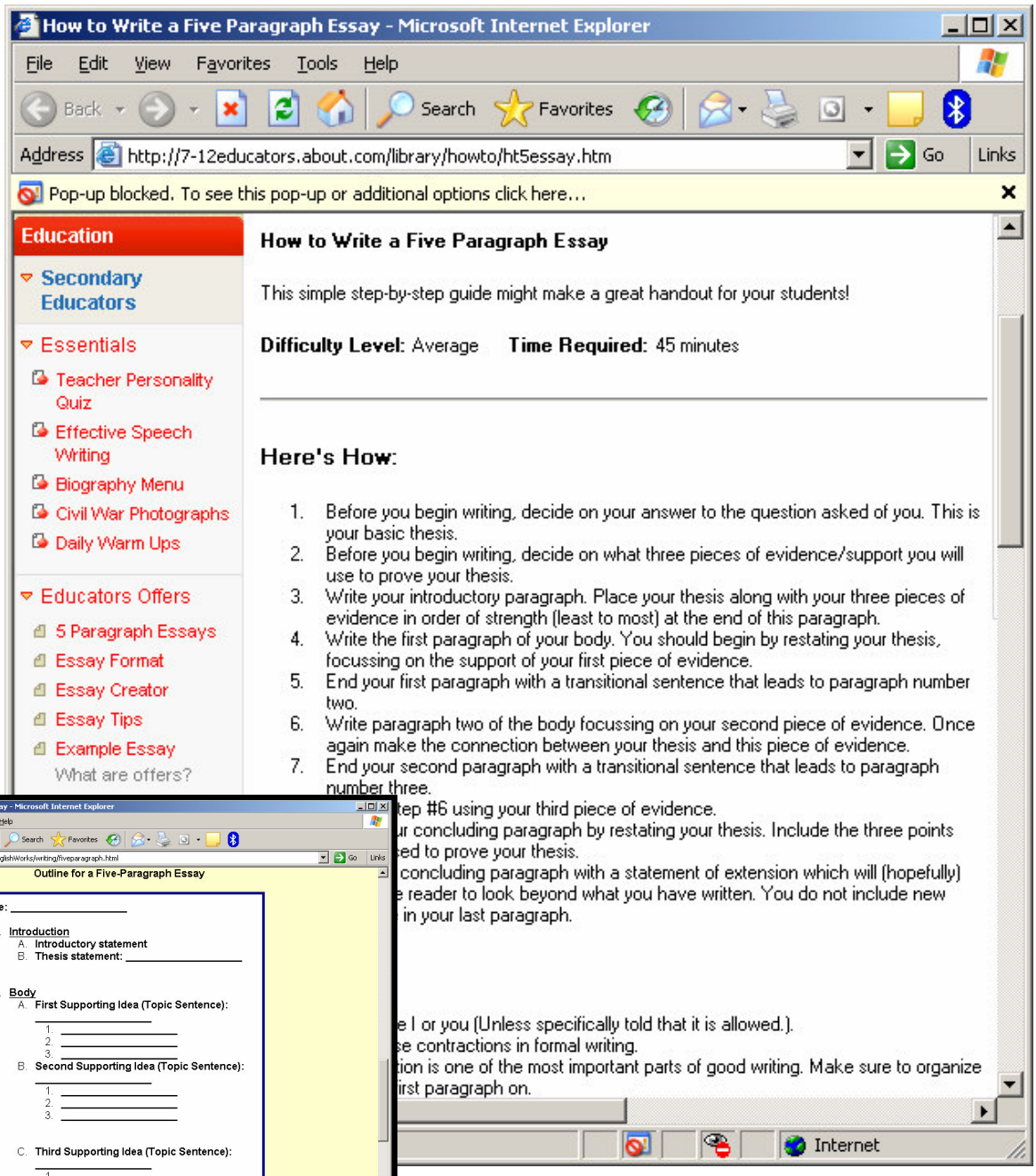
Bonus: The Five Paragraph Essay

An Easy Way to Write a Great Short Report…



LP3: Usability

Discussion Questions

- What is "usability?" Where should you look for usability in the world of information technology? How would you measure it?
- Does usability cost money, save money, or make money?
- How do you provide appropriate levels of usability for users who have widely different knowledge, abilities, and beliefs?
- How many senses do we have? How do we use them when we interact with our environment? When we interact with computers?
- Why do we have computer printers? Monitors? Speakers?
- Why is a picture worth a thousand words?
- What is your favorite technology, and why?
- What is your least favorite technology, and why?

Approaches to Usability

- "Usability is the field of study that describes the efficiency of communication across the human-machine interface." (Stanton)
- Create a Matrix for Determining Usability
  - What are your criteria?
  - How will each of them be weighted?
  - How will each of them be measured?

- Design for Usability – i.e. appropriate level of "simplicity" and "ease of use."
  - Who are the end users, and what role do they play in helping to measure and maximize usability?
- Software Design
  - GUIs
  - Menu standards
  - Cut and paste
  - Undo and Recycle Bin / Trash Can
- Hardware Design
  - Tablet PCs
  - Notebooks
  - PDAs
  - Plug and Play

Imagine if every Thursday your shoes exploded if you tied them the usual way. This happens to us all the time with computers, and nobody thinks of complaining.

Jef Raskin

- Portability
  - Bandwidth and power tethers
  - Books and paper vs. E-books and PDAs
- Murphy's Law
- Localization
  - Language
  - Time zones
  - Translation tools
- Accessibility
  - Screen readers
  - High contrast display
  - Pointers
  - Haptics
- Process Design
  - eBay and PayPal integration for sellers
  - Amazon one-click for buyers
- Operating system strengths and weaknesses
  - Windows
  - Unix
  - Linux
  - Mac OS

Training

- Training is the other end of the interface equation.
- This is my real-world approach, and is more concise than an idealized academic model
  - Determine who your users are, and exactly what you want them to be able to do. (Learning Objectives)
  - Determine what they know now, and what they don't know. (Preliminary Assessment)
  - Develop training that effectively bridges the knowledge gap. (Training Development)
  - Conduct training. (Training Delivery)
  - Determine whether your users can now achieve the learning objectives. (Final Assessment)
  - Repeat as necessary.

Instructor Notes

- Clip of robotics controlled over the Internet from William Shatner.
- Demonstration of MS Office 2003 voice recognition and text-to-speech capabilities.