

Exploring Life New Navigation Designs Feedback

November 21, 2000

We recommend going with the RedHill Studios sample navigation design. It is more pleasant to use than the Traylor navigation scheme. It is also more pleasant to look at. Its use of metaphors and visual parallelism makes it more appealing.

Traylor Media sample navigation design:

1. • The blinking "GO" button is very distracting. It is recommended that the GO button be removed. Make the slider bar active so that the user is taken to the designated Web page when the mouse is released.
2. • The color scheme is inconsistent. The color scheme should use only one color scheme. For example: use only colors from the blue/green family or use only earth tones.
3. • There are no markers on the slider bar path. It is recommended that you think about using the "Beatnik" application to add sound such as a "Click" when the slider bar moves over something important.
4. • On the Chapter 4 main page, there is too much bold face type. It is redundant to have the word GO in quotations.
5. • The twin navigation on the Chapter 4 main page produces contradictory results. Moving the slider bar to display Concept 4.4 and then clicking on "4.1 Sunlight powers life" on the page results in taking the user to the "4.1 Sunlight powers life" Web page while displaying 4.4 The Working Cell : Energy From Food above the slider bar.
6. • On the "4.1 Sunlight powers life" Web page there are twin navigation paths for identical functions; the same control bar of arrows and circles are located at both

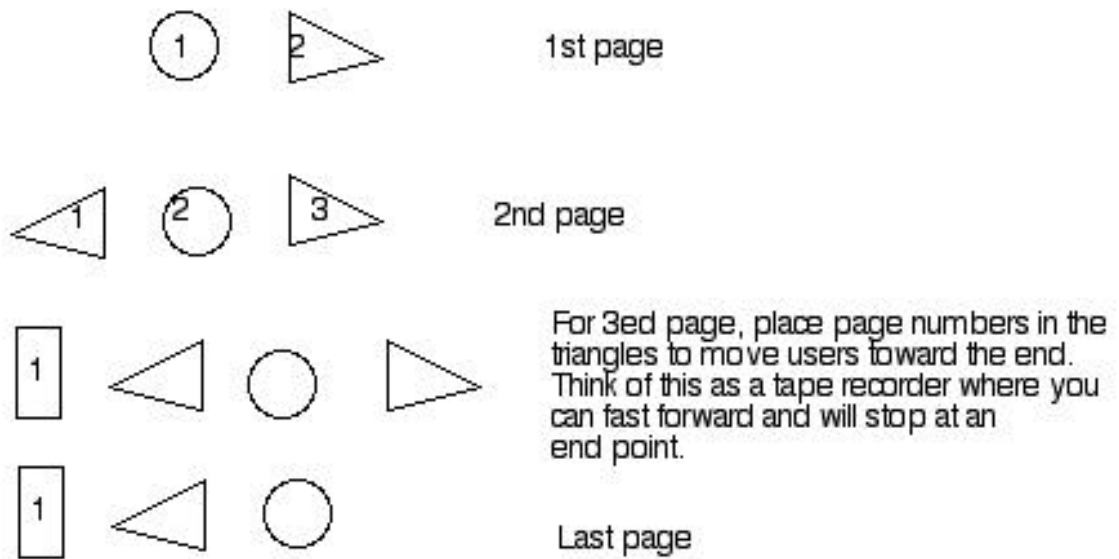
the top and bottom of the page. This is redundant. Only one set of navigation path circles and arrows is needed.

7. • There is no organizing device to let users know if they are navigating within a section of a chapter such as 4.1 or across chapter sections.
8. • Take care where you leave open (“white”) space. If you trap it in odd locations, the eye is drawn there. Normally it should go around the edges of the screen. Note how much white space was trapped between the redundant navigation described in 6 above.

RedHill Studios navigation design:

1. • Chapter 4 main page: The idea is not bad. The flow theme is good. Curves should be smoother. Branches should be parallel (maintain the same established curve). It feels strange that the Laboratory 7 branch fails to follow the established curve. This is not pleasing to the eye. Similarly, the Laboratory 8 curve moves sharply to the left.
2. • There is too much text on the Chapter 4 main page. The screen is too cluttered. Think in terms of freeing up some white space for displaying pop-ups. It is not necessary to have the full titles on the main diagram. The page is crowded with too many words. You can eliminate 22 words from this screen. Choose no more than 4 words from the title to be displayed. For example, 4.3 can be shortened to "ATP powers cellular work". The entire title can be included in the pop-up on the left side of the screen above the single sentence description now used.
3. • The backbone curve does not look like a smooth line. It appears to have inconsistency in the curve, which may be caused by the crowding of the words in the middle.
4. • A light flare from PhotoShop might be a nice touch added to the activities (Laboratories, Explore It, etc.) coming off the branches of the main curve. It could be used later to echo the idea of the light flare of the sun around the edge of the earth and could make a nice opening screen to establish the curve theme. This could be done with a transition animation from that curve to the curve on the

- screen. Since the “earth rise” would start as black (showing the curve and flare) and move to blue (earth with its atmosphere and oceans) it would also lead from black to the blue color theme employed now.
5. Try to space icons more evenly on the curve.
 6. The shape is consistent for each type of activity and section.
 7. Icons on the curve are well designed and appealing. Icons have been designed using a system and conventions well.
 8. It is recommended to use the "Beatnik" application to add a "click" sound when the user's cursor goes over an icon.
 9. Concept 2 screen: The print size is small. 16-point type is recommended using the Times Roman font. 14-point type font would be a minimum size to use.
 10. Concept 4.3 on page 2: The "circled 2" should be grey or some other color. As green, it implies that you are going somewhere.
The "Next Concept" wording on the top line is redundant. It is not necessary. This navigation is present in the left column. It is recommended that "Next Concept" be removed from the top line.
 11. The page navigation on the top right corner will have a problem with sections with large number of Web pages, such as Laboratory 8. You will need to plan ahead for this.
 12. Below is a recommended navigation page scheme to use:



One possible color scheme: The current page circle could be light gray with a black page number. The next page arrow could be green with black page number. The previous page arrow could be gray/green with black page number. The first page box could be light gray with a dark green number.

13. On the Web pages, the word "Home" on the top line is not aligned quite accurately with other images on the screen. It probably needs to move right two spaces or so. It is close enough to almost align and not far enough right to be obviously intended to represent a new alignment. The graphics person should look at this.