WebWatch

Online Scholarship

The Wikipedia model has been praised and panned. While the contributor-based strategy has been successful at assembling an immense set of online information in a short amount of time, it has also suffered from inaccuracies and manipulation of content by contributors. Attempting to build on the strengths of Wikipedia as well as address its shortcomings is Scholarpedia, an open-source effort edited by Eugene Izhikevich. Built on the same MediaWiki engine as Wikipedia, Scholarpedia differs from the former by delivering articles—at press time, topics included astrophysics, computational neuroscience, and physics—written by experts and then peer-reviewed to ensure accuracy. Additionally, each article has a curator responsible for its content, and the contributing authors retain copyright with an aim to enhance ownership and accuracy. Though not nearly as broad in scope as its cousin yet, Scholarpedia's emphasis on information validity will be welcomed (and hopefully expanded) by all.

[www.scholarpedia.org]

In Glorious Abundance

Credit the French for the 'a gogo' phrase popularized in the '60s. With a literal meaning of "in abundance, galore," it's also an apt appellation for the Science a GoGo Web pages chock full of fun content. The welcome page is full of News Items of Interest that are updated daily and span a diverse range of topics, such as the effects of processed food on young brains, the disappearance of wild oysters, and the evolutionary function of disgust. If your tastes are for lively, spirited discussion, you'll enjoy the Discussion Forums covering General Science, Not-Quite Science, Physics, and Climate Change, among others. If nothing else here provides enough intellectual amusement to suit you, the Curiosity Shop's toys, such as the Space Age Ant Farm, should appeal to the inner geek in everyone.

[www.scienceagogo.com]

Methodist

Norman W. Edmund, the namesake of Edmund Scientific, deserves recognition for founding one of the most important supply houses for budding young scientists in the '50s, '60s, and '70s. The role he played in stimulating the curiosity of several generations of youngsters is difficult to overstate.

Micropolitan Museum and More

Though the subjects it covers are tiny, the word that comes to mind when describing the intellectual, artistic, and educational components of the microscopy-uk (Mic-UK) web site is 'sprawling.' Starting with *Micscape* (the site's free, monthly online magazine), visitors will discover fascinating explorations of microscopic and macroscopic worlds archived and indexed in a digital library dating back to 1995. If you're interested in art forms spanning less than one millimeter, Mic-UK's Micro-politan Museum contains eye-catching, jaw-dropping images of cells and the worlds they populate. Curated by Wim van Egmond, the museum lays claim to the finest microscopic masterpieces nature has produced. From an educational perspective, the site's school projects, movies, information for beginners, and pond life identification kit are just the tickets for stimulating curiosity.

[www.microscopy-uk.org.uk]

Fresh sphagnum moss leaves, transmitted autofluorescence with blue excitation and darkfield. © 2010 David Walker, *Micscape*.

Edmund's passion for science and the scientific method are also on display at The Scientific Method Today, a site that aims to stimulate interest in scientific investigation, much as his company's products inspired the young scientists of yore. Visitors can start the exploration by downloading Scientific Method worksheets, and click on the links for more detailed descriptions of what the site offers. In what he dubs "SM-14," Edmund outlines 11 steps of the method plus three supporting characteristics that guides one through scientific inquiry. Most importantly, the model is thorough, free of copyright restriction, and readily understandable by scientists of all levels.

[www.scientificmethod.com]

Talking Tox

Illustrating the environmental hazards related to where people work, live, and play is the NIH's informative Tox Town. With the use of iconic living environments hyperlinked to additional information about hazards, Tox Town is accessible to virtually anyone. Visitors seeking information can locate it by clicking on Neighborhoods, Chemicals, A-Z Index, and A-Z Disasters & Health. In Neighborhoods, for example, iconic settings of Cities, Farms, Towns, Ports, and the US Border can be accessed. Each one contains an image of

the location loaded with links to pertinent information.

[<http://toxtown.nlm.nih.gov>]

ViewTube

With respect to atomic/molecular concepts, seeing is an important step in conceiving, and this principle forms the foundation of the University of Liverpool's informative ChemTube3D web site. Focused mostly on basic and organic chemistry, ChemTube3D peppers its pages with Jmol-based illustrations of molecular forms that can be manipulated and tweaked by users. Using the materials, one can manually rotate molecules or spin them on an axis. They can be viewed in different forms (ball & stick, sticks, and spacefill) as well. Mechanisms of organic reactions, including electrophilic and nucleophilic addition, elimination, aromatic substitution and many others are shown using the same models.

[www.chemtube3d.com]

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