

HumanSaga User Testing
User Testing - Script

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Introduction

Thank you for being willing to assist us the testing of the HumanSaga system.

HumanSaga is a worldwide web site with a database of historical events, which can be used to explore history by creating and interacting with dynamic historical timelines.

I want to remind you that we will not be testing you; we will be testing the system.

Before we begin, I'd like to ask you to read and sign a brief **Consent Form**.

Pre-test Questionnaire

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions about yourself and your background.

(Complete Pre-test Questionnaire verbally)

Description of Testing Routine

Today we will be testing a paper (or “low fidelity”) prototype of the system, which means that each screen display is drawn on paper.

I will be acting as the computer for our test, displaying different screens as you select them. Because this is only a prototype, there may be screens for which we do not have a paper mock-up. If this happens, I will briefly describe what you would have seen when that screen was displayed. While you test the prototype, _____ will be taking notes.

Remember, we are not testing you – we are testing the interface. If anything is confusing or difficult, it is helpful for the designers to know, so they can improve the interface design.

We will be giving you three specific "tasks" or "goals" to try as you use the system. Each task should take about 5 to 10 minutes. You can decide when you are satisfied with your completion of each task. Following the test, we will ask you a few questions about the system to help assist the designers in their work.

While you are using the system, we will ask you to "think aloud", by speaking what you are doing, why you are doing it, and what your responses are to the results; for example, "Now I want to get more information about X, so I'll double-click this button." This will help our "computer" to know what actions you are taking and will help us judge how understandable the system is. "Thinking aloud" may seem unnatural at first, so if you forget, I will try to remind you to continue talking aloud.

If you want to take a break or discontinue the test at any point, you are certainly welcome.

Do you have any questions before we start?

Scenario 1

You and a friend were discussing the Nobel Prize for Literature and the way it may be biased towards European writers. He comments that no Africans have ever won. You are sure he must be wrong, but you can't remember who would have won it. You turn to HumanSaga to settle your dispute.

Use HumanSaga to determine whether there have been any Nobel-Prize-winning authors from Africa. If so, who and when?

(Give handout to participant)

Scenario 2

Part 1

After watching the film “Apollo 13” (on video), you wish you knew more about the history of the US moon-landing program in the 60’s and 70’s. Specifically, you don’t remember how many times the US landed on the moon.

- Use HumanSaga to get a list of the times the US landed on the moon.
- Broaden your timeline to get an overview of the entire US space program.

(Give handout to participant)

Part 2

You’ve had a thought – some of the developments in space exploration are so implausible that 100 years ago they must have seemed like science fiction. You decide to look at the history of science fiction literature to compare it to fact. You put aside your NASA timeline and instead search for the history of science fiction literature.

After coming up with a timeline of the milestones in science fiction, you create a new timeline that lays sci-fi alongside the real history of space exploration.

If any of the timelines are extraordinarily long, try to create a more reasonably sized timeline.

(Give handout to participant)

Scenario 3

You recently visited the Free Speech Movement Café at Moffit Library and wish you knew more about the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley in the 1960’s

Create a timeline of Berkeley’s Free Speech Movement.

After viewing this timeline, you want to see more clearly how the Free Speech Movement fit in with the Civil Rights Movement taking place across the country.

First, create a timeline of the history of the Civil Rights Movement.

Then, merge the two timelines (Free Speech Movement and Civil Rights Movement). Limit the merged timeline to only the events of 1964 and 1965.

(Give handout to participant)

Written post-test questionnaire

Before we finish, we have a few questions about your experience using the system. First we have a brief written questionnaire. For each of the nine statements, please indicate how strongly you agree with it, with 7 being strong agreement and 1 being strong disagreement.

Verbal post-test questions

Finally, we have a few additional questions.

- First, do you have any overall comments or impressions of the system?
- Can you recall any specific instances when there was something that you wanted to do, but couldn't?
- Can you recall any specific instances when the system did something that was not what you expected?
- Do you have any specific suggestions or advice for the designers?

Thank you again for your time. Your help should be very valuable for the continued design of the HumanSaga system.