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Lesson

Lessons vs. Quizzes

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This discussion has been locked because a year has elapsed since the last post. Please start a new discussion topic.

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

Andrew Chambers
Friday, August 10, 2012, 8:20 AM

Hi, Thanks for starting this discussion. I would like to continue ti. What then is the difference between Lesson and Book? I have some content in a unit of material. About 60 pages. And interspersed in this are pictures and activities. I would like to make them into an online activity. Which format is best? Note that we use MS Word/PDF for our content development and delivery (as we are distance based). Suggestions appreciated. Lesson seems best but there are some gotcha's and I really need a TOC on the left and simple sequencing...

Average of ratings: Useful (1)

Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

Lynn Scarlet Clark
Friday, August 10, 2012, 4:13 PM

Hello Andrew - hope I can help as I'm a bit of an advocate of lessons...

With book there is always a TOC (unless you turn it off with [CSS](#)) and in lessons you can choose whether to have a left hand menu (turn on in the settings). The navigation here is a the bottom of the screen and doesn't just need to stick with 'previous' and 'next' so is much more flexible in its own right. With lessons the jumps mean you can rename the navigation buttons (on each page) and can have multiple navigation outcomes - although don't confuse your learner!

Book for me, *can* do much of what (basic) lessons do and I have used it in certain situations. Mostly this use is for instruction manual-type content. However, it just feels more restrictive and for major learnng content I always use a lesson.

With complex content it's also much easier to review that content and edit it with lessons, as the edit view allows you to see all the pages in a succession. My sites/lesson/content are all stylised to be coherent and relate to each other so it's crucial that it's easy for me to see whether the first page correlates to the last etc.

You've already correctly identified that also there's the ability to include (simple) questions with lessons but this also has the knock-on effect or scoring/grading and then the extra ability to use lessons and scoring as criteria for student progression. Moodle can only say that someone has looked at a book module - with lessons there are more options, including the need for learners to make it through the whole lesson and land on the end of lesson page to prove it's been completed. You can then use this as the gateway to open other materials up to them or issues certificates etc.

Both will happily use [javascript](#), swf objects, media etc. Neither (or anything really in Moodle) takes content particularly well straight from Word - even though there's a Word code stripper be advised that extraneous gumpf (techical term) from Word will make it's way in. As a precaution I always copy Word content into NotePad (Mac - Wordpad in Office) then copy that out again into Moodle.

So, you could list the choice between the two very simplistically down to two things - how complex it is to build (the more complex the easier it will be to cret what you want in lessons, including questions) and how linear you want the learner's navigation experience (just page turning? use book. For questions, jumps and copletion criteria use lessons).

There's a lot more besides, to using lessons but I'd be writing a short book if I put it all in here, especially with examples. If you have specific questions about lessons, I'd be happy to answer.

Average of ratings: Useful (3)

Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes
[Glenys Hanson](#)
Saturday, August 11, 2012, 3:11 AM

Hi Lynn,

I only discovered the Book module fairly recently but I find it really useful for keeping the clutter off the main course page. Here are some of the things I use it for:

1. Presenting the course.
2. Giving instructions about the work to be done in each section of the course.
3. Providing "tutorials" about how the work should be done or how to use Moodle, in PDF or Flash video format.
4. Providing examples of material outside Moodle. Not just links, YouTube videos, for example, can be made to play on the Book pages.
5. Providing learning exercises in Hot Potatoes format: the students can see if their answers are right or wrong but they're not recorded in the gradebook.
6. Showing "demo" Hot Potatoes exercises to teachers or prospective students. They can view them as "guests" - they don't need to log in to see them. At least, not on Moodle 1.9.

My experience is mainly with distance learning courses where some students need an awful lot of help while others need hardly any. Putting the "help" in Book form means those that need it can find it easily, whereas those that don't aren't bothered by the presence masses of links and text.

x

Glenys

Average of ratings: Useful (2)

Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes
[Liz Katz](#)
Saturday, October 13, 2012, 1:46 AM

I'd love any examples/demos you would be willing to share! I could really use some help developing a "how to use Moodle" tutorial for my students and learning myself what a hot potato might be. 🙂

Average of ratings: -

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Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes
[Mihail Omelin](#)
Sunday, October 14, 2012, 4:47 AM

Hello, Glenys. I also will be very glad to see some good examples of Hot Potatoes with effectively used lesson tool. Thank You beforehand. -- Mihail Omelin

Average of ratings: -

Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes
[Isabelle Langeveld](#)
Thursday, December 19, 2013, 7:06 PM

Hi Glenys,

1. *Providing learning exercises in Hot Potatoes format: the students can see if their answers are right or wrong but they're not recorded in the gradebook.*
2. *Showing "demo" Hot Potatoes exercises to teachers or prospective students. They can view them as "guests" - they don't need to log in to see them. At least, not on Moodle 1.9.*

Do you mean that you insert a HotPotmodule in a Book page? How?

Average of ratings: -

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Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes
[Susanna Wesson](#)
Sunday, January 5, 2014, 4:41 AM

Dear Glenys,

Could you tell me how you incorporate a pdf into a Moodle book?

Many thanks,

Susanna

Average of ratings: -

Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes
[Alex Varsakopoulos](#)

Yes I would like to view a demo of your book.

Thank you!

Average of ratings: -

Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes
Elizabeth Dalton
Thursday, August 16, 2012, 4:31 AM

I only wish Lessons allowed the same kinds of components to be added to sub-pages as we can add in the main course page, with exposure of buttons or activation of jumps tied to activity completion.

Average of ratings: Useful (1)

Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes
Joseph Rézeau
Thursday, August 16, 2012, 5:49 AM

@Elizabeth,

I have no idea what you mean.

Joseph

Average of ratings: -

Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes
Elizabeth Dalton
Friday, June 14, 2013, 2:51 AM

Sorry, I missed your response until now.

What I mean is this: Lessons provide a way to make branching content based on user actions, which is great. But the question types allowed in Lessons are not as varied as the question types allowed in Quizzes. This is unfortunate, because the API for Quiz Question Types means that there are new Question Types being developed all the time, as plugins, but Lesson can't use them.

The Activity Type I'd most like to see incorporated into Lessons is the Choice. This can be configured to show the participant how others have responded to a question. So for example, I'd like to play a video clip, as the participant to respond, then show them how their response fits in with other participants before moving on to the next part of the Lesson. If I use this to identify a misconception, I'd like to branch to a review page before continuing on with the video lesson.

Alternatively, I'd like to be able to include any Questionnaire Question on a Lesson page, and choose what information to show to participants before continuing with the Lesson. This is similar to the way I teach in "live" classes, where I often pause and ask students for examples or opinions before continuing.

Ideally, I'd like to see Lesson, Questionnaire, and Quiz integrated. I know they serve different purposes, but they use much of the same functionality. The distinction between a Quiz and a Questionnaire is largely a matter of how to treat the responses (grade or merely collect), and the main advantage the Lesson adds is branching navigation, which I'd like to be able to use in both Quizzes and Questionnaires.

I hope this helps to explain my earlier comment.

Average of ratings: Useful (2)

x

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

Joseph Rézeau
Friday, June 14, 2013, 4:33 AM

Elizabeth,

Thanks for your belated reply (better late than never).😊

I quite understand what you would like to be able to do, but I'm afraid an online CMS such as Moodle is still far from being as flexible as a face-to-face class. On the surface Moodle's Quiz, Choice, Questionnaire and Lesson may look similar to you, but they are totally distinct, unrelated modules and there is *no chance* that you can see them "integrated".

All the best,

Joseph

Average of ratings: Useful (1)

Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

Elizabeth Dalton
Friday, June 14, 2013, 11:57 PM

There are other online tools that can be used to create this kind of interactivity, e.g. SoftChalk. Even YouTube has the ability to integrate questions into videos in beta now.

As for integrating the different modules... I know the code bases will never be combined. But just as the different Activity modules were eventually subsumed into a single module in Moodle 2.3, I hope eventually a new module offering a flexible mix of functionality currently contained in Lesson, Quiz, Choice, and Questionnaire will eventually be offered.

Average of ratings: -

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Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

Joseph Rézeau
Saturday, June 15, 2013, 12:37 AM

Elizabeth "... *just as the different Activity modules were eventually subsumed into a single module in Moodle 2.3,*"

No idea what you mean. Can you be more explicit, please?

Elizabeth "*I hope eventually a new module offering a flexible mix of functionality currently contained in Lesson, Quiz, Choice, and Questionnaire will eventually be offered.*"

That is very unlikely to happen.😊

Joseph

Average of ratings: -

Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

Marcus Green
Sunday, June 16, 2013, 2:44 AM

x

Average of ratings: -

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Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

Joseph Rézeau
Sunday, June 16, 2013, 4:25 AM

@Marcus,

You mean it would be nice to be able to use questions from the (Quiz) questions bank in a Lesson activity. Yes, I agree.

But as for Elizabeth's hope for "... a new module offering a flexible mix of functionality currently contained in Lesson, Quiz, Choice, and Questionnaire will eventually be offered." that is totally unlikely to happen, simply because those activities serve *different purposes*.

Joseph

Average of ratings: -

Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

Elizabeth Dalton
Thursday, June 20, 2013, 11:38 PM

I realize that Moodle is, by design, not theory-neutral. But I think assuming the purpose that will be served by a function will never grow beyond its creator's intent is short-sighted. A more flexible long-term strategy would be to try to make the functions as interoperable as possible, so teachers and students can find new ways to use them in learning.

If Moodle can't do this, or the Moodle developers are not interested in doing this, learning communities may decide to migrate to more flexible LCMS systems that will allow them to design interactions to meet their own needs. (In my case, apart from the above-mentioned SoftChalk, I am exploring configuring Drupal to provide the functionality of Moodle in a more flexible way.)

Average of ratings: Useful (1)

Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

Tim Hunt
Friday, June 21, 2013, 12:51 AM

It is inevitable that any tool is used in ways that were not originally envisaged. Sometimes that is a really bad idea (e.g. using a chisel as a screw-driver). At other times, it is good (e.g. using a quiz to teach people something, rather than assess them on it).

Sometimes it makes sense to merge disparate things into one. For example combining a camera, media player, web browser and a telephone to make a smartphone. On the other hands, professional photographers still use an SLR camera.

In other cases, it does not work out. I bet you still have separate saucepans and frying pans in your kitchen. I do.

My view is that it probably does not work to try to make one single

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However, online interactive questions are a useful re-usable compoent (lego brick) that can be used to build several different activities including quiz, lesson, question practice, ... I have worked hard to make questions more re-usabile. I am doing what I can to get the question practice module built. I would like to see someone else convert lesson to use the question bank, but I won't have time myself for the forseeable future. Etc.

Average of ratings: Useful (3)   Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

Elizabeth Dalton
Tuesday, June 25, 2013, 10:40 PM

Yes, a huge thank you for all your efforts to standardize questions. 🙂

This discussion has helped me to clarify my thinking. The further standardization around the new question format is most of what I'm wishing for, e.g. Lesson and Choice being able to use the new question formats.

Questions are still pretty similar between Quiz and Questionnaire usage-- the difference is what the Activity module does with the user response (score and provide feedback vs. record and collate). The gap, then, is that it would be helpful for Lesson (or some other similar activity) to be able to act as either a Quiz or a Questionnaire, per page. I.e., given a user interaction defined on a Lesson page as either Quiz or a Questionnaire behavior, the interaction should provide a score and feedback, *or* collect the data and possibly provide an immediate collation and summary to the participant, and either way a navigation action may be triggered or presented as an option.

I do have some php skills and I may have more time this summer to start looking at code and making more specific suggestions.

Thanks again for the discussion, everyone. 🙂

Average of ratings: Useful (1)   Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

Joseph Rézeau
Wednesday, June 26, 2013, 12:41 AM

Hi Elizabeth,

I'm afraid it makes things difficult to understand if you "mix up" the four Choice, Questionnaire, Quiz and Lesson activities.

You write "*Questions are still pretty similar between Quiz and Questionnaire usage-- the difference is what the Activity module does with the user response (score and provide feedback vs. record and collate).*"

I totally disagree, again looking at the purpose of each activity. The goal of a Quiz is to assess/evaluate a student's knowledge, and therefore to score their answers, which can be evaluated as more or less "*correct*".

only what you say, i.e. what the activity does with the user response, the *fundamental* difference is in the *nature* of the questions you ask. Let me illustrate.

- Quiz

    1. Q1.- What are 2+2?
    2. Q2.- How old was Mathusalem when he died?

- Questionnaire

    1. Q1.- How many cars do you own?
    2. Q2.- How old are you?

It seems obvious that those are totally different, non-interchangeable kinds of questions. It would not make any sense to ask the Quiz questions in a Questionnaire or vice-versa. Hence the idea to keep in the Questions bank those two kinds of questions so they could be used in either activity does not make sense either.

2.- " ... *it would be helpful for Lesson (or some other similar activity) to be able to act as either a Quiz or a Questionnaire, per page. I.e., given a user interaction defined on a Lesson page as either Quiz or a Questionnaire behavior, the interaction should provide a score and feedback, or collect the data and possibly provide an immediate collation and summary to the participant, and either way a navigation action may be triggered or presented as an option.*"

I think what you want here is an *extension* of the current Moodle Lesson activity, which at the moment has all the features you want, except the "immediate collation and summary". If you could provide a scenario including those 3 features, I'd be quite interested in reading it.

The 3 features being:

a. "Traditional" questions (MCQ, Matching, Short Answer, etc.) which can be marked as correct/incorrect and given a score.

b. What is called "Question page", i.e. a page with 2 or more choices which "branch" the user to different routes.

c. Your new feature "collation and summary", which at the moment I fail to see what it would look like and implemented.

Looking forward to your "scenario",

Joseph

Average of ratings: Useful (1)   Permalink   Show parent   Reply

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Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

Elizabeth Dalton
Tuesday, July 2, 2013, 12:50 AM

I understand what you are saying about not putting Questionnaire and Quiz questions in the same bank. There are two reasons I am proposing what seems to be counter-intuitive to you:

1 - The code needed to administer the two types of questions is the same, i.e. whether you are trying to find out what proportion

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code, so you have the widest variety of options in both contexts for the least maintenance cost.

2 - There are times when there is a need to ask both factual and opinion questions in the same context. For example, if you are trying to correlate opinions about, for example, climate change with knowledge about the facts of climate change, you would need to ask both kinds of questions together.

3 - The scenario in which you would want to collate and present responses in a Lesson works like this: Learners arrive at a lesson page. They watch a short video. Then they are asked what questions they have after watching the video, in a free-text format. After responding, they have an opportunity to read the responses of other participants before continuing to the next page of the lesson. This helps to provide the context of the other participants, similar to a class discussion right after an activity.

Alternatively, instead of a free text question, the participants may be asked which of several statements most match their opinions about the video. Some of the statements represent common misconceptions. After responding, the participants see how others responded, and if they chose one of the "misconception" responses, they are directed to a remedial page before continuing with the lesson. Being able to see how others responded helps the learners to perceive that they are not the only ones who had the misconception.

This is especially important in teaching some science topics, where overcoming preexisting misconceptions can be very difficult. Affective strategies to help the learner accept that their current hypothesis is faulty become very important so the learner can move on to construct a more accurate model for themselves.

I hope this helps somewhat.

Average of ratings: Useful (1)	Permalink	Show parent	Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

[Marcus Green](#)
Friday, June 21, 2013, 6:17 AM

"I think assuming the purpose that will be served by a function will never grow beyond its creator's intent is short-sighted."

True, and I do not believe that assumption has been made by the main Moodle developers.

"A more flexible long-term strategy would be to try to make the functions as interoperable as possible, so teachers and students can find new ways to use them in learning."

True, and as Tim Hunt has said work has been done to make Moodle code interoperable. Examples of this are the move towards web services and the changes to the Quiz Engine to allow questions to be moved to other uses. There are almost certainly other areas where this has been done.

However all of these things take a mix of smart people, time, money and clever project management.

x

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

Isabelle Langeveld
Thursday, December 19, 2013, 7:05 PM

What a tremendously interesting discussion. I am really hoping this flexiblility in working with questions will come some day. It is funny to see how Joseph is sticking to what seems to me a sort of functional fundamentalism. I totally agree with Elizabeth that you sometimes want to have a lesson that mixes knowledge and opinion and seeing what other people think. It would be great if the Lesson is not just a closed individual activity anymore. Maybe you could even have short discussion on a lesson page. I am sure that this is what 'new learning architects' who combine pedagogical with UX experience are looking for and will use Moodle. If we want to keep the Moodle community growing we will need to evolve in this direction.

On the other hand I understand the difficulty of breaking through established patterns in thinking about Moodles architecture and to reprogramme.

For now you might go for workarounds like linking to a Choice in a popup or new window from a Lesson page and let them come back to the lesson and resume the path with what they found out in te Choice.

Average of ratings: Useful (1)   Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

Matt Fedorko
Tuesday, May 20, 2014, 10:16 PM

Isabelle,

I couldn't agree more on your comments. I read all of the way through, which is a rare thing on some of these boards, unless you're trying to find that one solution to that weird problem you're having!

My two cents on the Elizabeth v. Joseph debate '13 is that Moodle has improved tremendously since 1.9 (when I first became involved with Moodle). I love the new Assignment and the new Question Bank, just to name two commonly used and much improved elements, and I commend all who contributed to those improvements. As a user, not a coder, my desire is for similar types of improvements to be made to other elements of Moodle. I think that's a contender for "obvious statement of the year," and exactly how those "types of improvements" pan out is the soil many arguments grow from. So when Elizabeth proposes certain things, I think it's an example of the latter situation, not the former.

I think the most valuable thing out of the whole thing was that Joseph and Tim both chimed in to say that Lessons should use the QB.

As a user I love the Question Bank. Yes, it can be clunky, and to be truly useful you needed to do a little work (the "Question Sharer" role of lore -- http://docs.moodle.org/24/en /How_to_let_teachers_share_questions_between_courses), not to mention the learning curve, but in the end, I think it's better than the alternative, which is where every activity that wants to give a student a prompt and a way for them to input some data (by definition, "a question") does that in its own unique way.

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conclusion that she means integrating the actual Activities, but that instead that all of these Activities (which may differ based on WHY you're asking the questions, or WHAT TYPE of question you're asking, or how you want to govern student behavior, or your goals as an instrurutor) have access to a single resource where ALL QUESTIONS live, ie the legendary, guaranteed to be supported ad infinitum Question Bank.

I see no functional difference between survey type questions and "questions that have right answers" that would prevent the former's inclusion into the Question Bank. Consequently, I disagree entirely with Joseph's statement above that "It seems obvious that those are totally different, non-interchangeable kinds of questions. It would not make any sense to ask the Quiz questions in a Questionnaire or vice-versa. Hence the idea to keep in the Questions bank those two kinds of questions so they could be used in either activity does not make sense either."

Just because two types of questions might have different goals, or might not be used interchangeably in the same activity does not, in my mind, mean that they should not be stored or managed in the same way in Moodle. Joseph's arbitrary distinction between question types (or "functional fundamentalism" as Isabelle refers to it) serves no true FUNCTIONAL purpose, except to LIMIT functionality! I would suggest a thought experiment -- what would be gained by creating what Joseph is resisting, and what would be lost? The scales do not lie.

Furthermore, as Tim says, the QB makes a great "lego brick" to build new Activities. His Practice module is a great example. I proposed, at one point, an "interactive book" which would replace the Lesson module (which I harp on endlessly because of its problems...anyway, don't get me started...), which looked just like the Book Resource, except you could add "Question Pages" which would look just like one page from a Quiz and allow you to import 1-4 questions from the QB. Essentially, it was a slicker Lesson, without a lot of the bulkware that makes the Lesson so frustrating to use. Though, functionally, an updated Lesson Activity that made use of the QB would be just as useful.

Anyway...my two cents. They're probably irrelevant, as despite Joseph's resistance (to my reading), as I said before, both him and Tim seemed to say "yes, this would be nice, but who's going to do the actual work?" A very good question, indeed.

Average of ratings: Useful (1)   Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Lessons vs. Quizzes

Alexander Brown
Monday, August 31, 2015, 9:18 PM

A lot of this resonates with me. I want to be able to ask my students questions (of many different kinds, from opinion to multiple-choice to essay) between pages of information. But instead of creating a course consisting of a list of Page resources interspersed with extremely short Questionnaire and Quiz activities and navigation via the course page, I just want students to go from one to the next without noticing. Now, I could hard-code URL's and create artifiioal "NEXT" links on each item, but this really feels like a feature Moodle should have built in. I got excited when I first heard about Lesson, but if the questions only serve as navigational tools then I think we're missing a trick.

x

◄ **Is Lesson the correct activity to display only a video**　　　　**End of Lesson Error** ►

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