

HILT - Evaluating Tools v. 2

HILT 2017

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This activity asks you to critically survey a number of aspects of digital tools, including ownership, accessibility and ease-of-use.

1. Who owns the tool? What is the name of the company, the CEO? What are their politics? What does the tool say it does? What does it actually do?
2. What data are we required to provide in order to use the tool (login, e-mail, birthdate, etc.)? What flexibility do we have to be anonymous, or to protect our data? Where is data housed; who owns the data? What are the implications for in-class use? Will others be able to use/copy/own our work there?
3. What materials does the tool require? What are the forms of data that it will accept and how are those represented? Are there any examples of the necessary data?
4. Does the tool have any possible applications in the classroom? What is the community of practitioners around the tool? Has anyone created tutorials for humanists? How much time does a student/collaborator need to learn to use the tool?
5. How much complexity does a tool present to online visitors? Is it intuitive or does a visitor need to develop a literacy to understand and use it? What are your support structures for elaborate or low-tech tools?
6. Does the tool allow for publishing interactive versions online? Is an interactive display necessary to communicate the relevant ideas or conclusions?
7. How accessible is the tool? For a blind student? For a hearing-impaired student? For a student with a learning disability? For introverts? For extroverts? Etc. Does the toolmaker provide any documentation of their efforts for accessibility?
8. If the tool is online:
 - a. Can multiple people collaborate on a project? Or does the tool require a single account?
 - b. How will the account(s) be maintained over time?
 - c. What is the long-term viability of the organization that offers the tool?