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## Using Quality/Time Graphs to Teach Freshman English Students How to Assess Journal Quality

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Wohrley, Andrew, "Using Quality/Time Graphs to Teach Freshman English Students How to Assess Journal Quality" (2012). *Georgia International Conference on Information Literacy*. 1.  
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# Using Quality/Time Graphs to Teach Freshman English Students How to Assess Journal Quality


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# Outline

- 
- The Problem:
    - Teaching students how to assess journal quality
  - Traditional Methods
    - Lecture
    - Pass around journals
    - Tear apart the article
    - iClicker and discuss
  - Their benefits
    - Lecture is simple
    - Pass around gives concrete examples
    - iClicker promotes feedback
    - Tearing apart the parts of an article is fun

# Cont'd


- Their Problems:
  - Lecture is boring
  - Passing around journals can be ambiguous
  - iClicker demonstrates who doesn't get the instruction, but not why
  - Tearing apart articles requires a supply of surplus journals

# The Solution

- Graph student understanding of journal quality!



# The Q-T chart

- 
- An adaptation of the traditional popular, trade, scholarly distinction
  - Is graphic
  - Encourages group work
  - Sets a baseline that all students can see for their understanding of journal article quality
  - Allows students to demonstrate understanding of article quality

# Explaining popular-trade-scholarly

- Popular
  - Illustrated
  - advertisements
- Trade
  - Focus on one industry
  - advertisements
- Scholarly
  - Written by scientists
  - Citations



# However...

## Journal Continuum

Popular

Trade

Scholarly




People

Aviation Week


Science



# Elements of Quality

- 
- Accuracy
  - Authority
  - Sources cited
  - Timeliness
  - Neutrality/Bias

# How it is done

- 
- Divide class into teams of 3-5 members
  - Give teams 2 minutes to answer a question
    - This question is deliberately broad
    - Aimed at getting the students to reveal what sources that they usually use in research
    - Encouraged to question each others choices for articles to find the best one

# How it is done, cont'd

- The groups then print out the first page of the item they found and tape it on a Quality/Time graph, with Q on the y axis and T on the x axis.
- The graph can be on any whiteboard
- The students make relative judgments of each article's quality, and absolute judgments of the date.



# How it is done, cont'd


- The instructor then reviews the groups choices and adjusts the positions of the pages to make them more accurate
- The instructor explains any changes
- This constitutes the first instruction on assessing journal article quality.
- The class then continues on with database instruction



# Conclusion of class

- After database instruction
  - Students reform groups
  - Answer the question they were given at beginning of class
  - Incorporate what they have learned
  - Cannot use the articles that they used the first time

# Results

- 
- There has been a distinct improvement in sources selected
  - Even better, the students seem to grasp better, why they should want better sources
  - Students more willing to use older sources

# Future

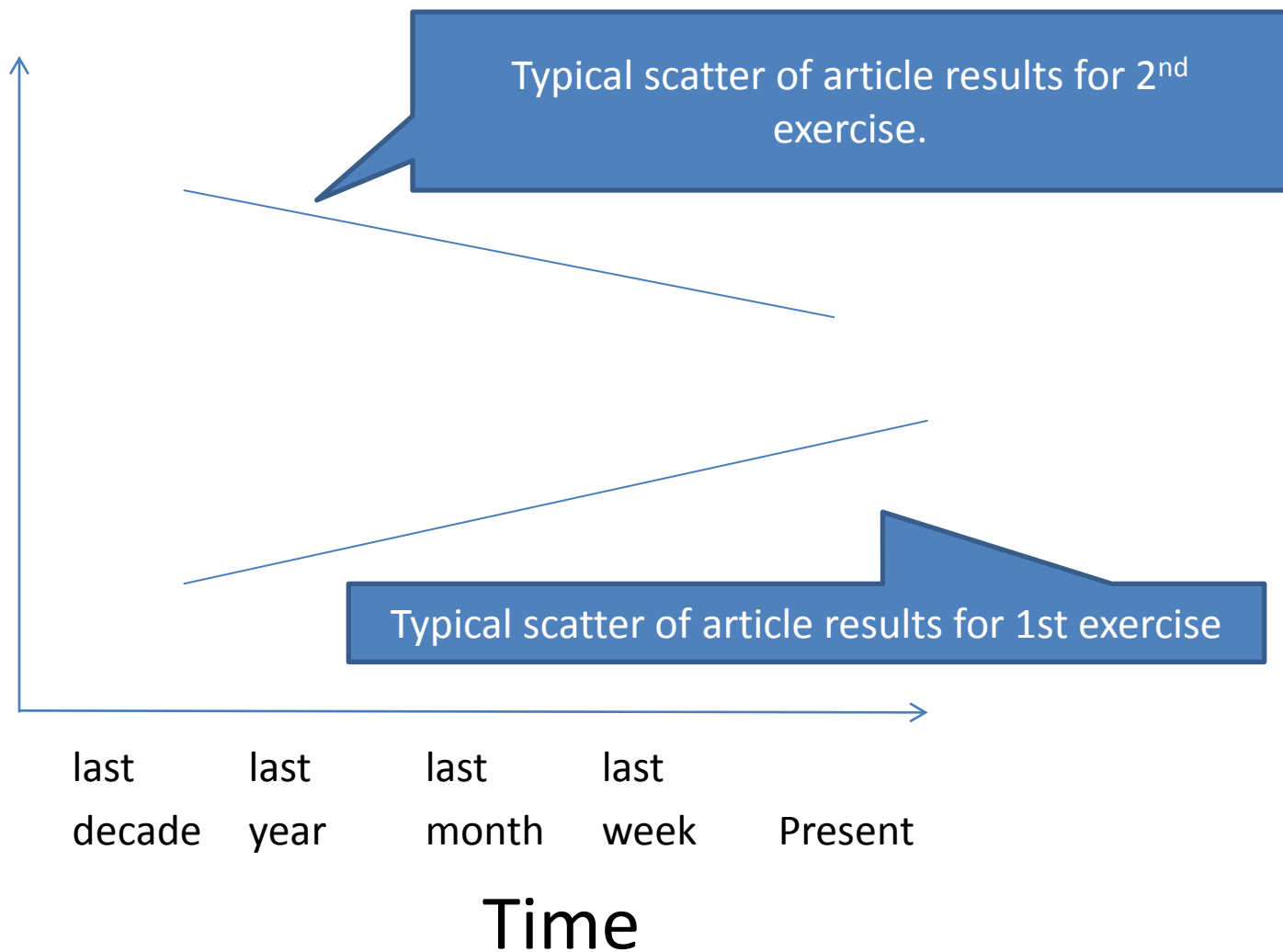
- Add Quantitative measures
- Teach my colleagues this method
- Maybe go online



# Example graph



Q  
U  
A  
L  
I  
T  
Y





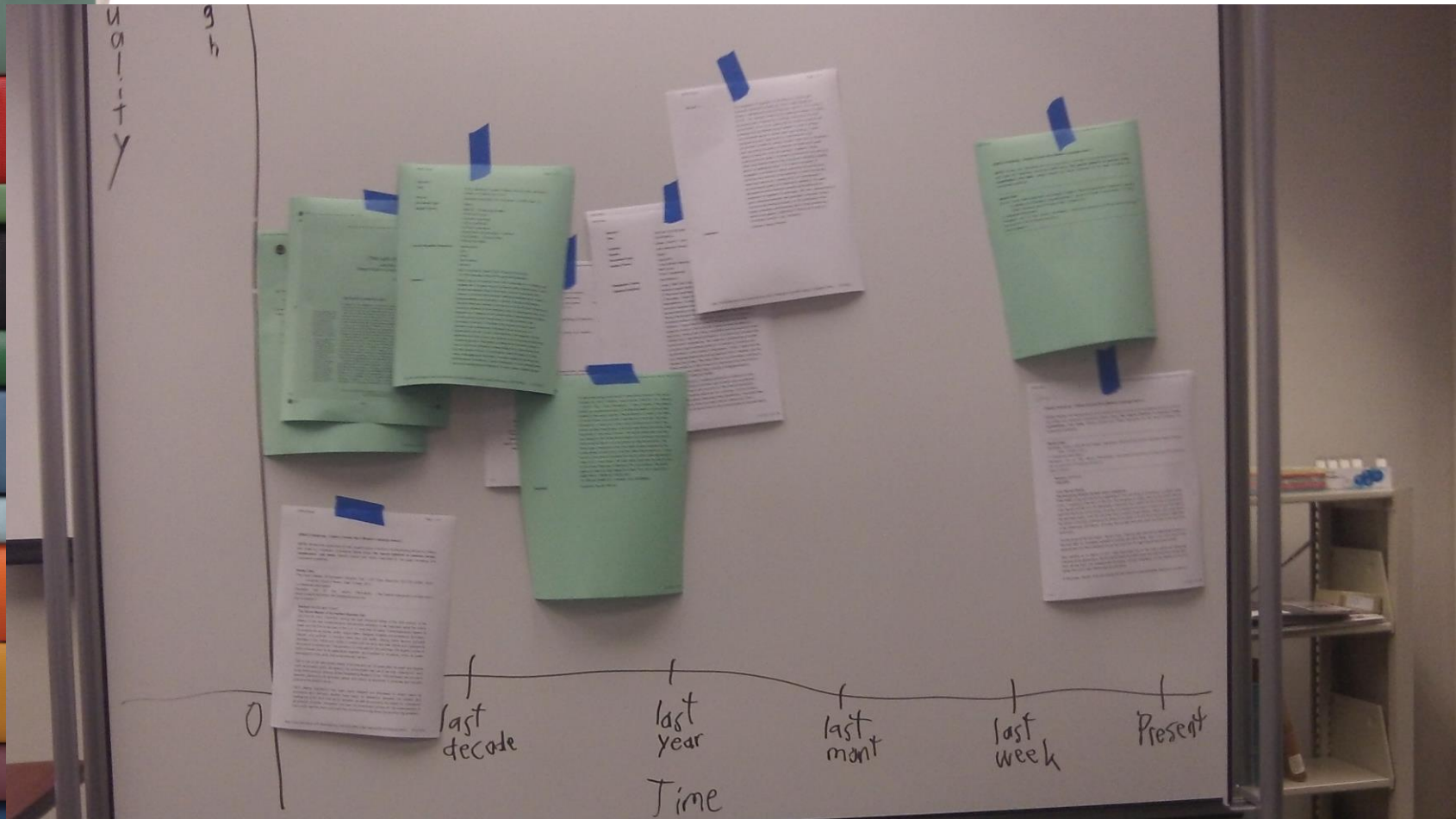
# Conclusions

- The Q-T graph
  - Gives instructors a baseline for their students understanding of journal article quality
  - Gives students an active learning exercise
  - Provides an assessment at the end of class of how well they understand journal article quality
  - Still being refined

# Results of exercise I

White sheets 1<sup>st</sup> exercise

Green sheets 2<sup>nd</sup> exercise



# Results of Exercise II

White sheets 1<sup>st</sup> exercise

Green sheets 2<sup>nd</sup> exercise

