As an instructional designer, I was very impressed with the course that I previewed, “Visual Tools for Literacy”. David Hyerle was videotaped presenting to a classroom audience on how to utilize visual tools to assist all kinds of learners to think creatively and analytically. Below is my synopsis of my findings in this course [(+) positive (-)negative]:

- I liked the fact that the camera followed the speaker and his motions. I felt as if the camera was an extension of my own eyes, as if I was attending the class in person.
- When the facilitator goes to the whiteboard, the camera is not able to capture everything that is written. I am disconnected temporarily.
- Audience is not “miked” so I am not able to hear clearly their responses to questions asked. I am again disconnected.
- I would have appreciated if someone had indicated to me that printing out the handouts prior to the beginning the course would have been helpful in following along and allowing me to take notes during the class.
- While allowed to pull up handouts during the course, I was not able to view at the same time as the video, so they were of little use.
- Mr. Hyerle does paraphrase as he is acknowledging audience responses and capturing their information on the whiteboard.
- PowerPoint slides alongside the video are timed to automatically move forward with the lecture and displays major points of that portion of the lesson.
- The agenda for each module of the lesson being viewed can be seen directly below the video. It shows the length of each video and allows the user to plan their time, pace themselves and/or choose the topic that is most relevant in that module in any order that they care to view.
- You can take a survey while the lesson is going on.
- Liked the mix of video, audio, documents, and interactivity…lots of choice for different learning styles.
- Allowed you to submit questions to several discussion areas.
- The discussion areas are part of the community that allows for chats and message board postings and is located on the Home Page.
- No clear direction on how you would access/view the answer to your question. Cannot be accessed from the lesson page.
- Able to leave feedback about the course, facilitator, materials, etc.
- The Menu gives you quick access to all the content for Visual Tools for Literacy.
- Bookmarking keeps track of your progress as you work your way through the program’s video content in the topics and shows which you have completed.
- Because it is organized in chunks it allows the user to access any module that is of interest to them at that particular juncture.
- After viewing the content of a particular section, the user can take the corresponding assessment.
- The assessment is aligned with the presentation, and materials.
+ The assessment indicates how many questions there are and how many
you would need to have correct in order to pass
+ After you have completed the assessment, you are informed of how many
you received wrong and are given the options to retake the assessment
(or not) and review incorrect answers (or not)

While the subject matter was not especially stimulating, Mr. Hyerle had a definite
command of the topics. I would have liked to see just a little bit more involvement
from the class, but appreciated the structure nonetheless. Much time, thought,
and planning went into the design of the site as well as the curriculum.

Well done!