



## New Look for BEEP

Project Eagle's first phase ended on June 30, and Project Eagle II began on July 1. As predicted in the last BEEP, June 1, there's been a three-month hiatus between issues as the details of the new grant were hammered out.

Although there was unanimous agreement to keep the BEEP's coming, the transition time seemed perfect to review the format of the publication and look for ways to make a good thing even better. So, beginning with this issue, BEEP will have some changes that should make it more useful to its readers.

Specifically, it will continue to focus on the best practices for one specific e-learning area in each issue (this month's being Reusable Learning Objects, a.k.a. RLO's). However, it will now be published every other month, with an added feature: BEEP's Best Bets, the best of what's new on topics often covered in previous BEEP's, like e-learning assessment/evaluation, resources for e-structors and administrators, free sources of information or instructional materials, innovative technologies, and more. So take a look, and, if you can, take a moment to tell the [Eagle II Project Manager](#) what you think of the new BEEP.

### Reusable Learning Objects (RLO's)

***"The main idea of 'learning objects' is to break educational content down into small chunks that can be reused in various learning environments..."***

David A. Wiley, [The Instructional Use of Learning Objects](#), (2001)

### Background and Theory

- [All About Learning Objects](#). Comprehensive overview of the RLO concept, produced by [Eduworks.com](#), that includes a tutorial and a table of pros and cons.
- ["Design Principles for Authoring Dynamic, Reusable Learning Objects."](#) Paper by Tom Boyle, London Metropolitan University, 2003, that identifies principles of construction for prospective authors of RLO's.
- [The Instructional Use of Learning Objects](#). Online version of a complete book by multiple authors and edited by David Wiley on the place of RLO's in e-learning instruction. Available for free viewing at the [Reusability.org](#) Website of Utah State University.
- [Learning Objects](#). University of Wisconsin Website that introduces the subject of learning objects to e-structors. It includes characterizations of the concept, as well as links to the objects themselves and to key organizations associated with RLO's and metadata.
- [Learning Objects Readings](#). Growing collection of links to readings on the subject, assembled at the [Blogspot.com](#) Website.
- [Learning Objects Survey](#). Results of a 2002-2003 online survey of e-learning instructors, designers, and administrators by [Alivetek.com](#). It includes current attitudes toward and uses of RLO's, as well as links recommended by survey-takers to useful free objects.
- ["Learning Objects – Whose Are They?"](#) Article by A. Ip and others in the *Proceedings of the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the National Advisory Committee on Computing Qualifications*, 2002. Scholarly approach to the subject, with a distinction between static and dynamic learning objects.
- [Talon Learning Object System](#). Case study by Jeremy Dunning of Indiana University examining the development on one particular RLO system known as the TALON system, composed of eleven templates built around a mode of learning and teaching.
- ["Use and Abuse of Reusable Learning Objects."](#) Paper by Pithamber Polsani, University of Arizona, in *Journal of Digital Information* (3:4), 2/19/2003. Assesses current definitions of RLO's, provides principles for developing a concept and provides guidelines for their creation.

## Examples and Repositories of Learning Objects

- [AEShareNet](#). Australian Website that connects those looking for learning objects to those who have them, with an online facility for licensing.
- [Apple Learning Interchange](#). Apple Computer's effort to encourage the interchange of ideas related to learning objects with "a museum of online exhibits created by educators for educators."
- [CAREO](#). Campus Alberta (Canada) Repository of Learning Objects that offers free access, after registration, to more than 3500 RLO's.
- [Learning Object Repositories](#). Exhaustive list of Websites worldwide with RLO's and/or guidelines for their production. Most, but not all, can be accessed by anyone.
- [Learning Technologies Center Website](#). Example of a Website done by the University of Arizona that provides online guidelines and graphics for e-structors at that institution who want to create RLO's. See also the university's [SVL \(Searchable Video Library\)](#).
- [Maricopa Learning Exchange \(MLX\)](#). Maricopa Community Colleges' (AZ) "electronic warehouse of ideas, examples and resources" (more than 500) presented as "packages" of reusable information.
- [Merlot](#). Established and well-known repository of links to RLO's that often include annotations such as peer reviews and assignments.
- [Miami-Dade Virtual College Learning Objects](#). Website maintained at Miami-Dade Community College (FL) with a growing collection of RLO's. It is presently in the pilot stage, with 16 medical-related learning objects online.
- [SMETE Digital Library](#). RLO's assembled by the Society for Mathematics, Engineering and Technical Education for students studying in those fields.
- [Splash](#). Consortium-based Portal for Online Objects in Learning (POOL) formed to develop an infrastructure for learning object repositories. It addresses the issues of building the architecture and makes its tools available for download.
- [Wisc-Online](#). Collection of open-access RLO's produced by higher education institutions in Wisconsin, plus guidelines for creation and use in instruction.

### BEEP's Best Bets

#### *E-Learning Administration*

- ["Effective Online Teaching – How Far Do the Frameworks Go?"](#) Paper (2003) by Cathy Gunn, University of Auckland, New Zealand, that examines some recently developed frameworks for effective online teaching, with recommendations for further development.
- ["How to Succeed in Distance Education."](#) Article by Dan Carnevale and Florence Olson in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 6/13/03, that discusses the importance of marketing online education to the right audience - particularly professional, working adults - to achieve success.

#### *Innovative Technologies*

- [Web Surfing Made Faster](#). Review by Larry Magid of CBS News of a subscription software service, [Propel](#), that at least doubles of the speed of a standard modem for \$60 a year.

#### *Instructional Resources*

- [Faculty Use of Course-Management Systems](#). Book-length results of a study of how faculty members use course management systems for teaching done at the University of Wisconsin. It provides insights on how and why they use a CMS, which features are most valuable to them, and what will motivate them to increase or discontinue their use of the systems.
- ["Predictors of Engagement and Participation in an On-Line Course."](#) Article by Marc D. Miller and other Georgia university staff in *The Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration* (6:1), Spring 2003. It explores several models of online course construction that can help develop effective online learning and training programs.
- [RateMyProfessors.com](#). Student-generated database with ratings of college professors nationwide. It has hundreds of thousands of entries, some with very candid student comments.

#### *Laws and Legislation*

- [Overview of State Accessibility Laws, Policies, Standards and Other Resources Available On-Line](#). State-by-state table that provides an overview of the laws, policies, standards and guidelines related to Website accessibility. Only states with laws viewable online are included.

[www.spcollege.edu/eaqle/BEEP/BEEP34.htm](http://www.spcollege.edu/eaqle/BEEP/BEEP34.htm)

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