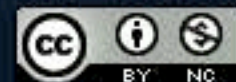# User Testing 1

INTRO TO UX

Mark W. Newman

Associate Professor, School of Information

User Testing
(Micro-usability test)

Mark W Newman

Jump Right In!

- Do some user testing!

What is User Testing?

Watch representative users try to accomplish important tasks using a product.

Aka "usability testing," though you often learn about other UX criteria too.

Why User Testing?

- **You learn *a lot* from watching people use a system**
  - **What works and what doesn't**
  - **Why things work and don't**
  - **User needs you missed**

- **Why not just use your own experience?**
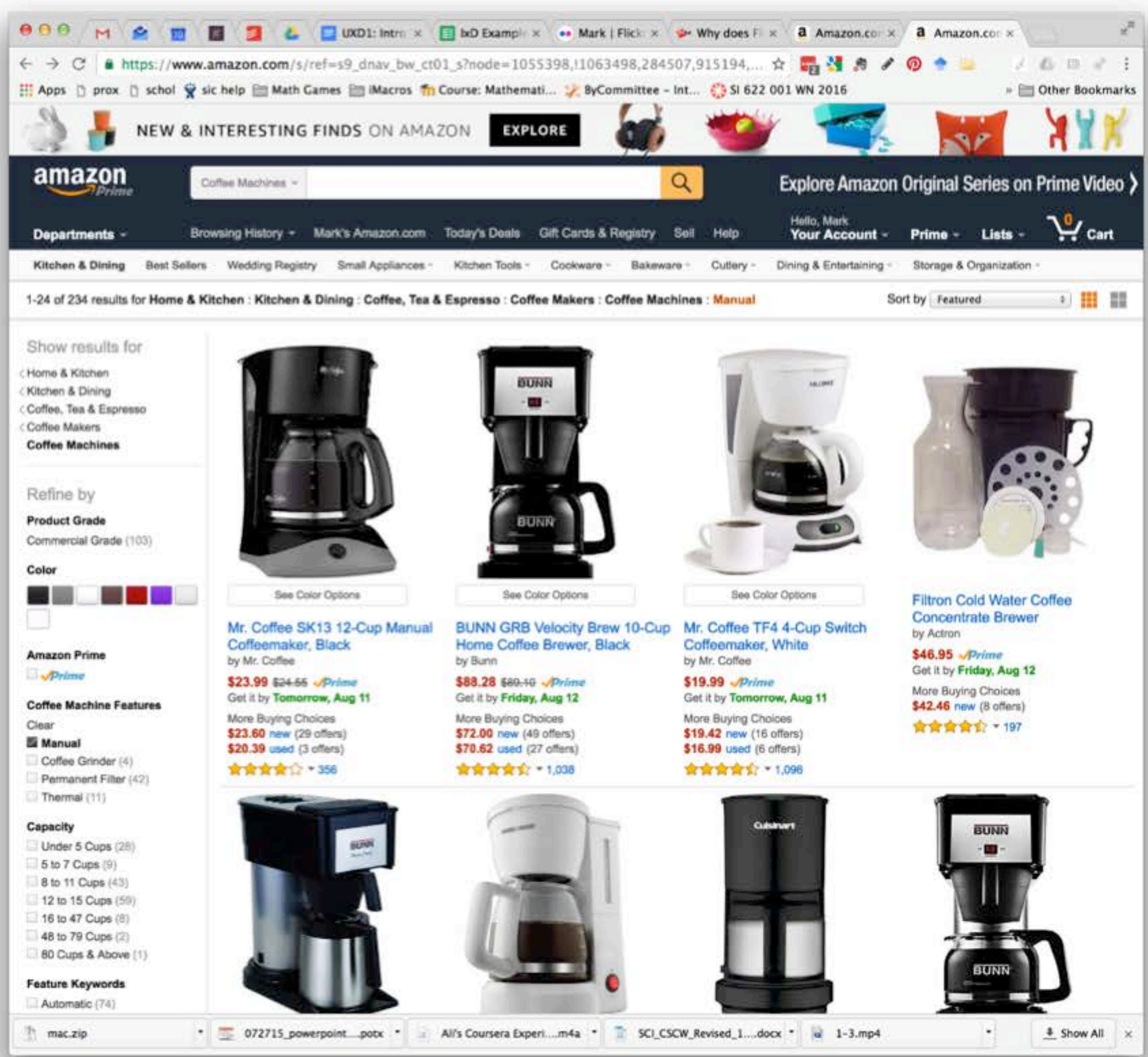 - **You know too much**
  - **You know too little**

Basic Idea

- Find potential users
- Ask them to do some stuff (tasks)
- Observe
- Ask some questions (debrief)
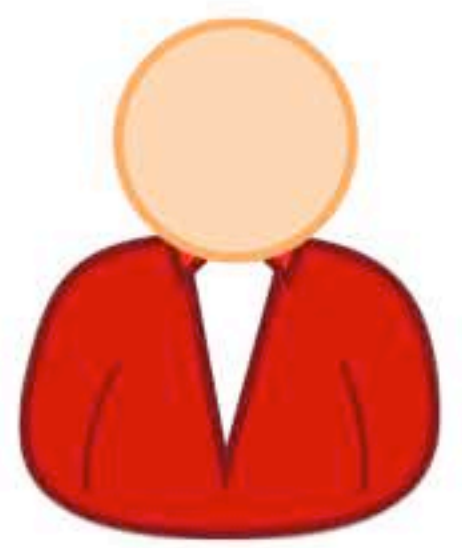- Write down what you learned

Potential Users

- **People who fall within the target audience**
  - **Attitudes**
  - **Behaviors**
  - **Characteristics**

- *Not* **current users**
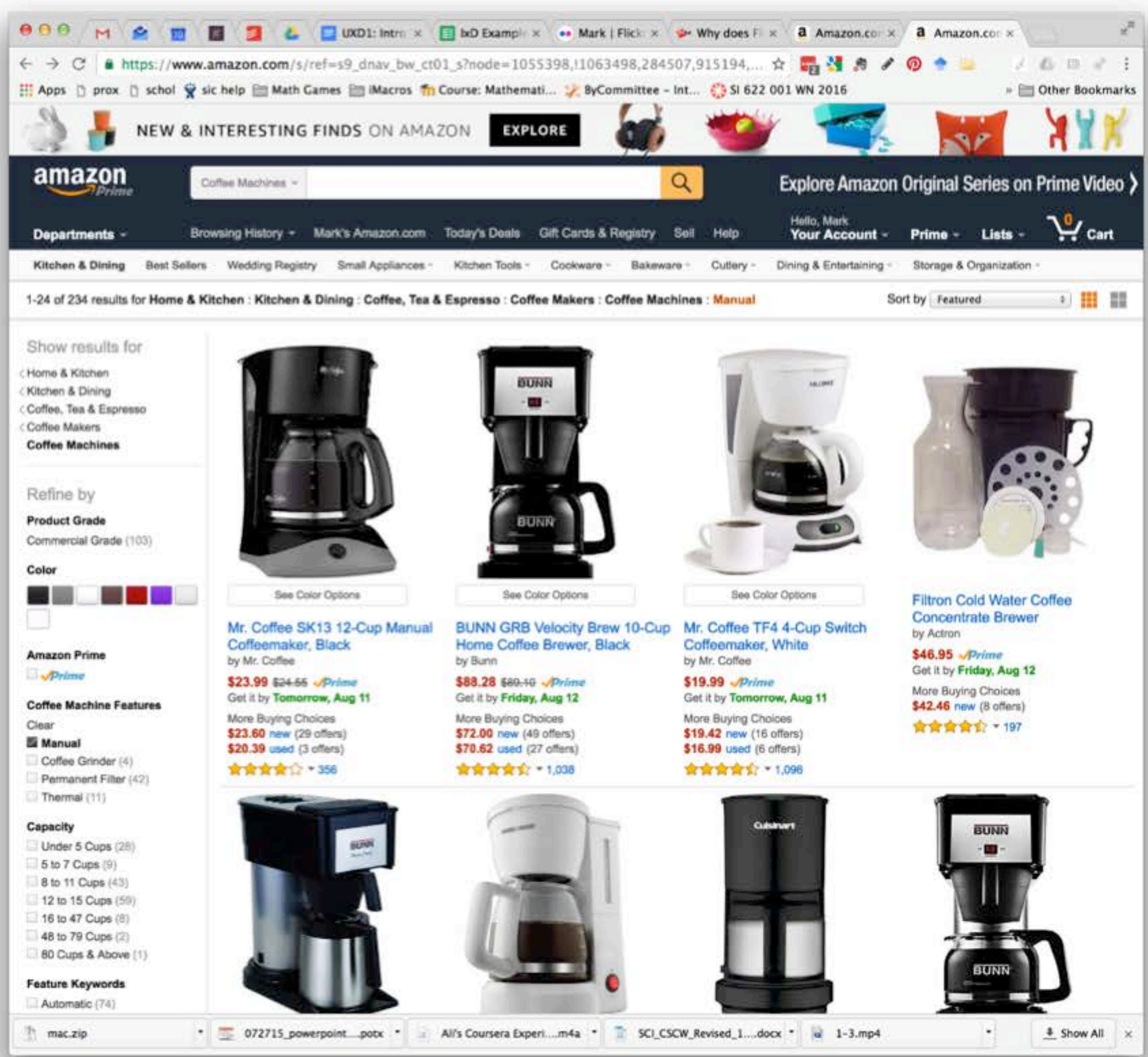 - **OK if current users of *system* but not for selected *tasks***
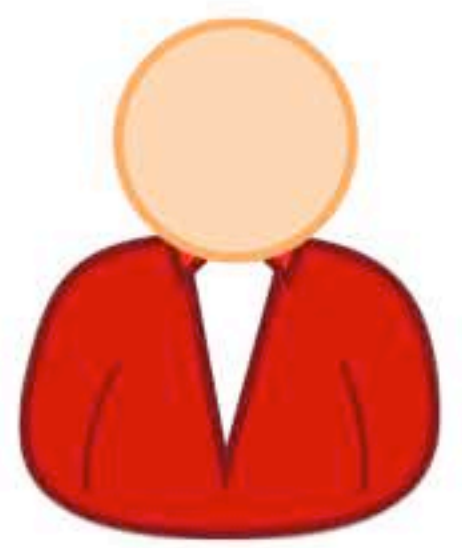
Tasks (What you ask them to do)

Buy a coffee maker that costs less than $100 and makes at least 32oz of coffee.

Tasks (What you ask them to do)

Enter a review for the most recent book you read.

Choosing Tasks

- **Things that *most* users *need* to do**

Choosing Tasks

- **Things that *most* users *need* to do**
- **More difficult things that *some* users *need* to do**

Choosing Tasks

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Buy a hardbound book by a Nigerian author that was published this year.

Choosing Tasks

- **Closed-ended tasks**
    - Have a clear end point
    - Have a verifiable outcome
    - Follow an expected path

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  - **May not be verifiable**
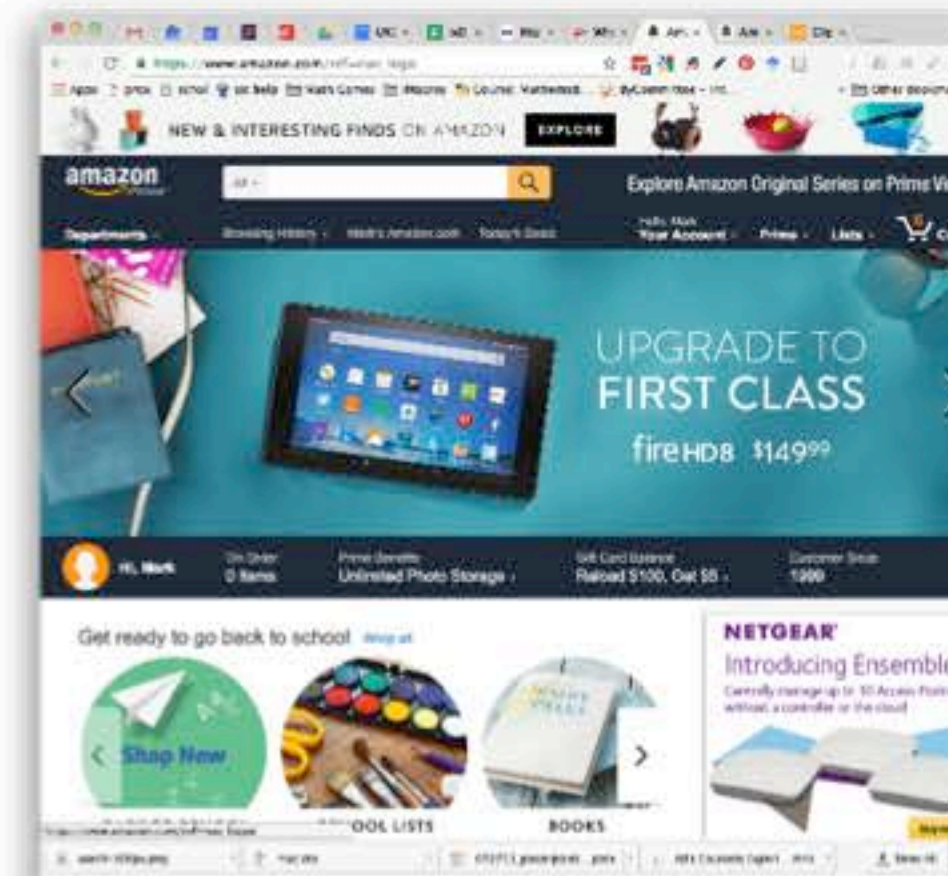 - **Allow following alternate paths**

Choosing Tasks

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  - **Allow user to judge when complete**
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  - **Allow following alternate paths**

Find some books you might like to read on vacation.

Which Are Better?

Closed-Ended

- **Less natural**
- **Control for motivation**
- **Control for interpretation**
- **Assess success**

Open-Ended

- **More natural**
- **Varying motivation**
- **Varying interpretation**
- **Success?**

Which Are Better?

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Open-Ended

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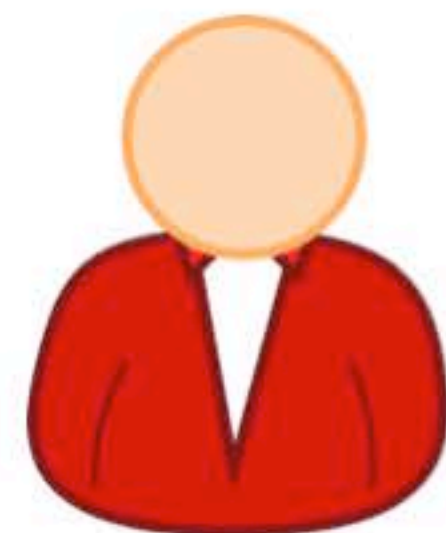- **Varying interpretation**
- **Success?**

Task sets

- **Progress from easier to harder**
- **Cover a range of critical task *types***
  - **(e.g., browse, search, buy)**
- **Can include open-ended and closed-ended tasks**
- **Be careful to avoid "ordering effects"**

Attributions

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