

# Wrangle Your Research With Zotero

## Tutorial - EME 6415

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## Topic

Zotero is an open-source tool that helps with research activities. It runs inside the Firefox browser and its evangelists claim it advances “Research, not re-search” (“Quick start guide [Zotero Documentation]”). According to the tool’s documentation it builds upon the foundation of earlier citation software, such as EndNote, while adding the collaborative and integration features of popular “Web 2.0” tools (“Zotero: The Next-Generation Research Tool » About”). Still in version 1.x, the tool’s site promises even more synergetic features in the releases to come (“Zotero: The Next-Generation Research Tool » About”). This paper outlines instructional design details regarding a Captivate tutorial focused on Zotero.

## Intended Audience

The intended audience for this tutorial about Zotero consists of University students, public and private researchers, and perhaps, even high school students involved in research projects.

Though the tutorial explores the research tasks surrounding a graduate literature review, anyone concerned with organizing the results of Internet search efforts will find this tool and, hopefully the tutorial, useful.

## Learning Objectives

The major learning objectives for this tutorial involve three common tasks that users employ when using the Zotero to perform online research. The objectives are within the cognitive domain and are predominantly procedural in nature. The learner will be able to employ Zotero features and tools to capture, organize and cite Internet resources.

## Learner Interactions

Providing learners with opportunities to practice and exhibit skills is a best practice for learning objectives that are procedural in nature. Unfortunately, this tutorial does not provide many of those opportunities. There are two assessment slides at the end of the tutorial, but they are not designed with a great deal of care. An effort was made to provide advance organizers and help the learners with creating a mental model before exploring the software, however. A conversational and informal tone was used in the audio to help involve the user and an agent was employed to engage the learner. The audio also was designed to help reduce the complexity of the software interface. Interactive tutorials created in Captivate offer tremendous potential for the types of learning objectives relating to procedural knowledge. This particular tutorial does not offer enough interaction for the learner. However, the opportunity Captivate offers for such interaction will not be lost the next time it is used as an instructional tool by this designer.

## References

Quick start guide [zotero documentation]. Retrieved February 28, 2008, from [http://www.zotero.org/documentation/quick\\_start\\_guide](http://www.zotero.org/documentation/quick_start_guide).

Zotero: the next-generation research tool » about. Retrieved February 28, 2008, from <http://www.zotero.org/about/>.