

## Citation metadata

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## Main content

Article Preview :

SITTING DOWN TO review Rosen Digital's new online product, Core Concepts Periodic Table (CCPT), was no easy feat this holiday season, having to compete as it did against a backdrop of traveling and feasting, shopping and celebrating, bowl games and board games that are the hallmarks of America's almost 400-year old holiday, Thanksgiving. The clean, inviting, and clutter-free home page of Core Concepts Periodic Table won me over, as it will your students. It is colorful, has just the right amount of organizational links, and is easy to navigate. Students don't always focus on authority, but Rosen Publishing's track record helps teachers and librarians rest assured that the content is appropriate for the K-12 market.

As we all know well, today's students are unintimidated by bells, whistles, links, tabs, and the like, but I prefer the advertising-free modus operandi of a database like this one. I also like Rosen's attractive, easily accessible points of entry into their thorough and reliable product. Learning about the periodic table and accessing information about groupings of elements and their properties via an interactive tool is a match made in heaven. A database allowing multiple users to browse it, no lost volumes worries, and 24/7 everywhere access add value to the research process and the development of information literacy skills, trumping other considerations for tighter-than-ever budget dollars.

Users will first want to take in the organization of the database, beginning with the four student links on the top navigation bar. Clicking on the first, Browse A-Z, reveals an interactive topic index to not only the 118 elements, but also important scientists, scientific processes, and a myriad of articles relating to better knowledge and understanding of the elements and their role in the sciences and day-to-day living. Examples of related topics include absolute zero, iodine deficiency, and semiconductor. The results list displays the part of the sentence where a user's search term first appears and once a student selects a link to follow, the search term is highlighted throughout the article. The Browse A-Z link is thorough and user-friendly but it is not a true index. A user searching for an explanation of an ion, for example, is better served by the omnipresent and highly visible query box.

The second link takes one to Element Builder, an interactive instructional animation teaching atomic numbers, atomic weight, ions, isotopes, and stability. Each element-building activity is followed by a short interactive quiz. I enjoyed altering proton, neutron, and electron numbers, changing one element into another and taking the quizlets. The instruction, however, is overly simplistic and students may stumble on a different isotope than the one intended. Allowing more flexibility in the design and a heads-up about possible isotopes would allay misconceptions that might develop. Students may be...

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