All About WebQuests

Main Menu: All About WebQuests

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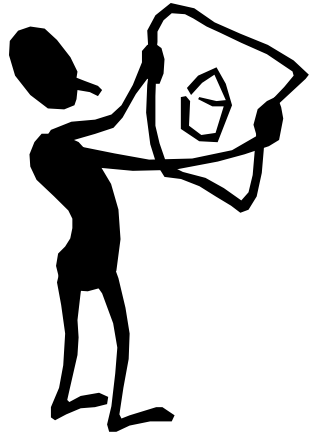
- What is a WebQuest?
- What are the components of a WebQuest? 
- WebQuest Activity
- How do you create a WebQuest? 
- How do you integrate a WebQuest?

What is a WebQuest?

"Bernie Dodge stood at the chalkboard in an empty classroom pointing to a row of three boxes he had just drawn. The first he'd labeled "learning inputs" and the last "learning outcomes." But the one in the middle excited him…



What is a WebQuest?

…"Transformations."

The goings-on in the minds of learners that take the raw information and work with it until it's transformed into new knowledge, constructed into new meaning. From that day back in 1995, this has been the definitive focus of the WebQuest strategy."

Tom March-ozline.com

WebQuests: Benefits

- Increases student motivation
- Provides real world experiences
  - Real resources
  - Real tools
- Develops higher level thinking skills
- Promotes cooperative learning
- Provides guidance for the students

Benefits for Your Students

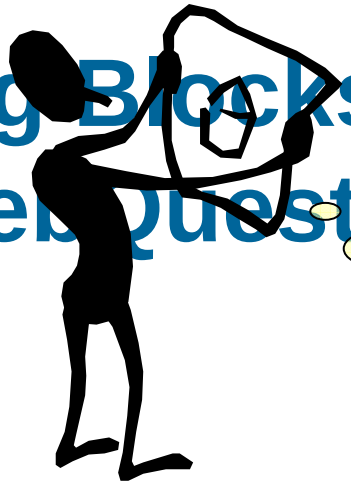
- Provides flexibility in the accomplishment of the task
- Well-designed links help answer questions and add positive input to the project
- Allows students to work independently
- Allows teacher to be the facilitator rather than the “sage on the stage”.

Highlights of a WebQuest

- Inquiry-oriented approach
- Based on doable, engaging task
- Uses pre-defined resources from the web
- Can be short or long term

What are the key components of a WebQuest?

Building Blocks of a WebQuest



Introduction

Task

Process

Resources

Evaluation

Conclusion

Introduction

- Sets the stage for the activity
- Catches the reader's attention to draw them into the quest
- Provides background information on the project
  - Mars Bound (Grades 3-5)
    - http://questgarden.com/92/10/6/091124131232/index.htm
    - This Quest takes a look at understanding Mars.

Task

- States what the students will be required to do
- Avoids surprises down the road
- Details what products will be expected and the tools that are to be used to produce them
  - Solar System Exploration (Grades 3-5)
    - http://questgarden.com/91/52/9/091118153409/task.htm
    - This is an opportunity to learn about the different planets in our solar system.

Process

- Gives a step-by-step description, concise and clearly laid out
- Provides links to Internet sites interwoven within the steps
  - Thanksgiving: Now and Then (Grades 3-5, 6-8)
    - http://questgarden.com/91/88/7/091122091933/process.htm
    - This is an opportunity to learn about the origins of Thanksgiving.

Evaluation

- Display a rubric to measure the product as objectively as possible
- Leave little room for question
  - A President to Lead Them All (Grades 3-5, 6-8)
    - http://questgarden.com/46/59/1/070212084545/evaluation.htm
    - This is an opportunity to select any past President to lead us again. Be prepared to defend your selection.

Conclusion

- Summarize the experience
- Allow reflection about the process
- Add higher level questions that may be researched at a later time
- Give food for thought about where to go with the information gained, how to relate it to other learning opportunities
  - Mars Bound (Grades 3-5)
    - http://questgarden.com/92/10/6/091124131232/conclusion.htm
    - This Quest takes a look at understanding Mars.

Writing a WebQuest

What is the Process for Writing a WebQuest?

The WebQuest Page

Choose a Topic

Identify Resources

Design Assessment

Establish Goals

Specify Task

Design Lesson

Develop Pages

Implement WebQuest

Evaluate & Revise

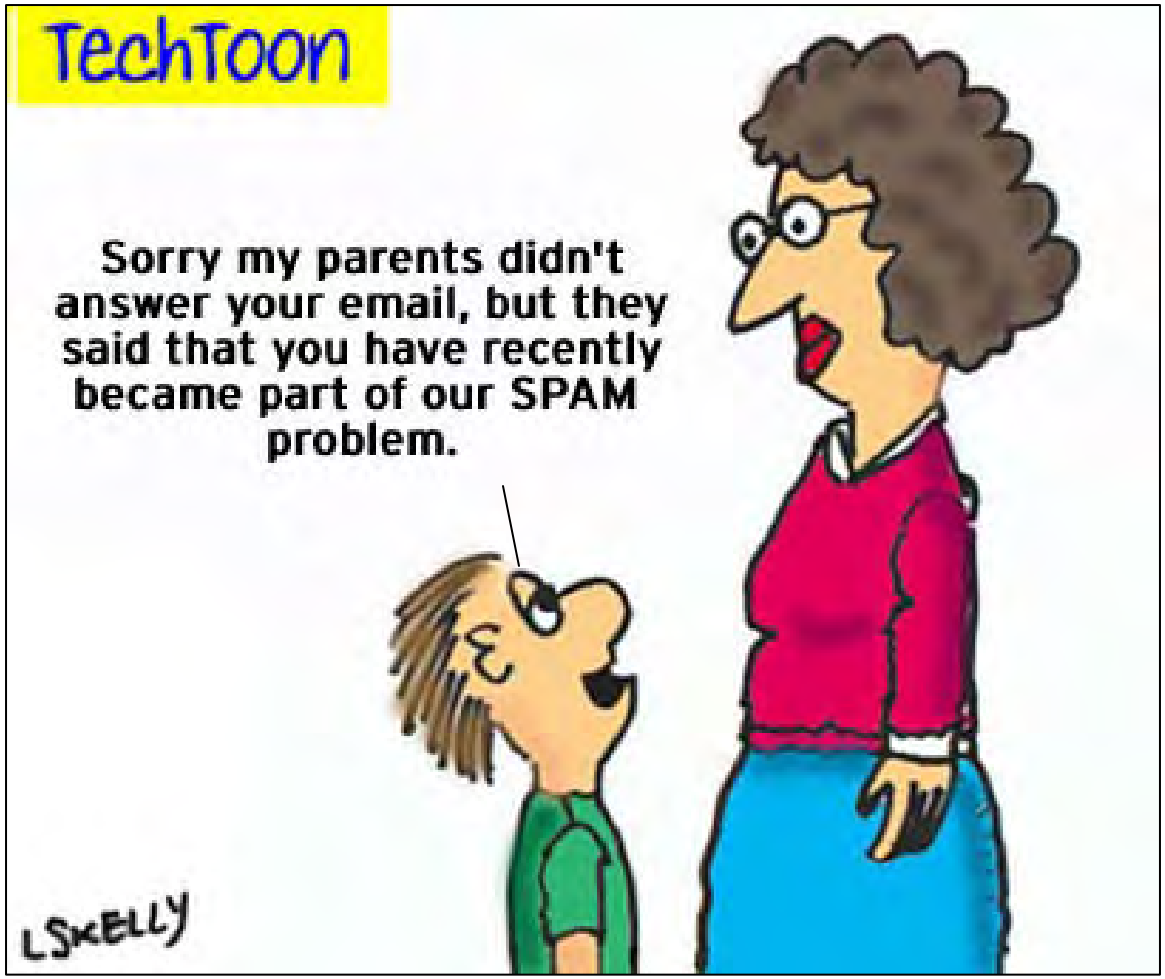
Don’t Forget Mr. Bloom

- Use of Bloom’s taxonomy
  - Higher level thinking skills
    - Knowledge
    - Comprehension
    - Application
    - Analysis
    - Synthesis
    - Evaluation

Are all WebQuests Created Equal?

WebQuest Activity

Techtoon


TechToon
Sorry my parents didn't answer your email, but they said that you have recently became part of our SPAM problem.
LSKELLY

Not all WebQuests are created equal…

- Let's compare a series of WebQuests using the WebQuest format.
- Here we get the chance to compare five different Quests from four different points of view at four different levels
  - Let's go to:
  - http://webquest.sdsu.edu/webquestwebquest-es.html

Our Process

- We will divide into groups of four
- Each member of the group has a specific role
- Each individual will judge the Quest from his or her assigned point of view

The Four Roles:

- ✓Efficiency Expert
- ✓Affiliator
- ✓Altitudinist
- ✓Technophile

What are the beliefs and tasks of each role?

The Efficiency Expert Believes

- Time is very valuable
- Too much time is wasted on unfocused activities
- WebQuests must give maximum bang for the buck
- You like short, unambiguous activities that teach small things well
- If the Quest is long term, it had better deliver a deep understanding of the topic at hand

The Affiliator Believes

- The best activities are those where students work together
- The best WebQuests create a need for discussion and consensus
- WebQuests where students work alone are not your cup of tea

The Altitudinist Believes

- Higher level learning is the most important thing for you
- Factual recall is a waste of time
- The only reason to bring technology into schools is to provide the opportunity for analysis, synthesis and the ability to take a stand on issues
- Creative expression is an important goal for the learner

The Technophile Believes

- The Internet is way cool.
- The best WebQuests are the ones that make best use of the technology.
- The better the students learn to use animation, video, audio and graphics the better you like it.
- If you can't use the Web to the fullest, give you a worksheet any day.

Our Process

- This part of the activity will be limited to 45 minutes
- Meet in your group and assign roles (10 minutes)
- Examine the sites individually (no more than 10 minutes per website)

Now that you know your role…

- Examine each WebQuest site listed
- Using the WebQuest template, jot down notes as you look at the site
- Stay in character as you look at the sites on your own
- Don’t compare notes until you get back into your group
- Do not spend more than 10 minutes on any website

And next…

- Reconvene as a group
- Poll your members to get the two best and two worst sites
- Assign one member of the group to record your thoughts
- Come to a compromise consensus as to your team's nominations for best and worst and why.
- Transfer your results to the PowerPoint template.

Now for the Debriefing

- Using your PowerPoint presentation, share your conclusions with the class
- Have fun.

Do not go to the next slide unless you are creating your own WebQuest.

How do you create a WebQuest?

Now to the Resources

- First, you must know where to go to find resources quickly, effectively and efficiently
- Next, you must be able to evaluate those resources to choose those that will allow you to accomplish your goals
- Let's see if we can find the Keys to the Kingdom

Use Technology as a Tool:

- Your WebQuest must be in service to specific objectives
  - First step: Determine your goals based on your own curricular needs
  - Second step: Examine the technology available to you to accomplish your curricular demands

Let technology work its magic…

- Match appropriate web resources to your goals, wishes and desires
- Use the technology in a time effective manner
- Make technology part of the solution
- Puts otherwise unavailable resources in the hands of your teachers
- Delivers time sensitive information with immediate impact

Identify the Keys

- Understand the unique nature of Internet research
- Redefine the role of the media specialist and technology resource teacher
- Open the world to your students

How Do We Know Where We Are Going?

- All search engines are not created equal
- Select search engines appropriate for your needs and only for preliminary preparation
- Use directories to focus your search immediately and find the sites you need
  - Google Directory
    - http://www.google.com/dirhp
  - TekMom
    - http://www.tekmom.com/search

Evaluating Online Resources

- When you arrive at the site can you tell:
  - Who provides, updates and sponsors the site?
  - Why is the site provided
  - What sources does the provider use?
- Evaluation Tools
  - Kathy Shrock's Evaluation Forms

Can We Trust Our Guide?

- Does the provider clearly state their identity?
- Is the purpose of the site clear?
- Does advertising overshadow the content?
- Does bias color the content?
- Is the title of the site appropriate to the content?

Can We Return When We Want to?

- Was the site easy to locate?
- Can you maneuver around the site easily and quickly?
- How about those plug-ins?
- Is there a fee or subscription?
- Is the page available consistently?
- Are there any problems loading?

Can We Find Our Way?

- Is the site fun?
- Is it easy to use?
- Do graphics clutter rather than enhance?
- Take a look at the links-are they well-organized, well chosen and well maintained?

What benefits do my students and I derive from the trip?

- Is the subject matter relevant?
- Is the viewpoint understandable?
- Is the material appropriate for the intended audience?
- Is the content quality high?

Let’s take a look at some of the best sites to take you where you want to go:

- Google
  - http://www.google.com
- Kathy Schrock
  - http://www.discoveryschool.com/schrockguide
- Research-It!
  - http://www.itools.com/research-it

When Your Sites Meet All Your Criteria…

- Make the sites easily available to your students
- Stop the eternal drift by making it easy to get to the sites where you want them to arrive
- Use all the tech tools at your disposal on the web to accomplish your purposes
- Create a lasting resource so that you do not have to constantly reinvent the wheel

Next Learn to Create a Lasting Resource

- Document Quests, both successes and failures
- Create a log book that contains pertinent data
- Periodically add successful entries to a database available network wide

How do you integrate a WebQuest?

How Do You Integrate?

- Examine different management issues
  - Size of class?
  - Number of Internet ready computers?
  - Large screen display?
  - Class layout?
  - Time frame of the unit?
- Examine different groupings
  - Large group?
  - Small group?

How Do You Integrate?

- Examine different student abilities
  - Same ability level?
  - Mix and match?
- Examine instructional strategies
  - Teacher centered?
    - Teacher leads the WebQuest
  - Student centered?
    - Teacher facilitates the activity
    - Students work at computer centers
      - Instructional approach?
        - Linear?
        - Multi-directional approach?

Define Jobs

- Who collects the information?
- Who does the word processing?
- Who does the art work?
- Who does the scanning? video?
- Who is the project historian?

Take out the Template and Let's Get to Work

- The first choice is that of a topic
- The best topics are those that are inadequately covered in existing resources
- Tom March suggests "starting where you're at", an area that is your specialty, that tickles your fancy, that you love to work with
- Still can't come up with an idea? Try Tom March's Idea Machine
  - http://www.ozline.com/learning/machine.html

What's the Most Important Part?

- Bernie Dodge says "The task is the single most important part of a WebQuest."
- As all WebQuests are not created equal, tasks are not created equal.
- Let's take a look at Dodge's view of the variety of tasks

Dodge's Taxonomy of Tasks

- Retelling Tasks
- Compilation Tasks
- Mystery Tasks
- Journalistic Tasks
- Design Tasks
- Creative Product Tasks
- Consensus Building Tasks
- Persuasion Tasks
- Self-Knowledge Tasks
- Analytical Tasks
- Judgment Tasks
- Scientific Tasks

Retelling Tasks

- Absorb information and demonstrate understanding
- Easy introduction to the use of the Web as a resource
- Students report using PowerPoint. Photo Story 3 or other multimedia programs

Compilation Tasks

- Take information from a number of sources and put it into a common format
- Practice making selection choices and explaining them
- Requires organizing and paraphrasing skills

Mystery Tasks

- Lures students into the topic
- Works for all levels
- Requires synthesis of information from a variety of sources
- Demands that the student absorb information from multiple sources, put information together, eliminate false trails

Journalistic Tasks

- Maximizes accuracy by using multiple accounts of an event
- Broadens understanding by incorporating divergent opinions in their report
- Deepens understanding by using background information sources
- Allows the opportunity to examine their own biases

Design Tasks

- Requires the students to create a product or plan or action that accomplishes a pre-determined goal and works within certain constraints
- Encourages creativity while still dealing with limitations

Creative Product Tasks

- Lead to the production of something within a given format (painting, play, skit, poster, game, song, etc.)
- Evaluation emphasizes creativity and self-expression, as well as criteria specific to the chosen genre
- Stresses historical accuracy, adherence to an artistic style, use of conventions, internal consistency, limitation on length, size, or scope

Consensus Building Tasks

- Exposure to differing viewpoints that must be articulated , considered and accomodated
- Learners take on different perspectives by studying different sets of resources
- Based on authentic differences of opinion
- Results in the development of a common report for a specific audience

Self-Knowledge Tasks

- These tasks are aimed at acquiring a greater understanding of one's self
- They involve long term goals involving ethical and moral issues
- They can also key in on self-improvement, art appreciation or personal responses to literature.

Analytical Tasks

- Develops the knowledge of how things work together and how things within a topic relate to each other
- Learners are asked to look closely at one or more things and find similarities and differences
- Looks for relationships of cause and effect and their meaning

Judgment Tasks

- Presents the learner with a number of things that the learner must then rank
- Requires the ability to make an informed decision among a limited number of choices
- Provides a rubric or some set of criteria for making the judgment

Scientific Tasks

- Requires making hypotheses based on the understanding of background information
- Teaches the students to test hypotheses by gathering data from pre-selected resources
- Encourages the students to determine whether the hypotheses were supported and deliver the results in the form of a scientific report

Online Web Design

- WebQuest Generators:
  - QuestGarden (NEW)
    - http://webquest.sdsu.edu/
  - Teach-nology
    - http://www.teach-nology.com/web_tools/web_quest/
  - Filamentality
    - http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/

In Conclusion…A Good WebQuest

- Asks a clear, challenging question
- Goes beyond recitation
- Uses multiple resources
- Often involves groups
- Calls for information manipulation

Any Questions?

For More Information

Harcourt Connected Learning

www.harcourtcl.com