

WebQuests

A Brief History of WebQuests

In 1995, San Diego State University's Bernie Dodge and Tom March developed a type of lesson plan that incorporated links to the World Wide Web. Students were asked to solve some kind of a problem or complete a project. The scenario they were given was intriguing and motivating. The students were asked to analyze and synthesize the information that they collected on the Internet and to work with their classmates to come up with solution.

The WebQuest concept incorporated project-based learning, authentic assessment, and inquiry-based learning and teaching. Teachers observed their students actively learning and collaborating. Parents and administrators were pleased that children were using the Internet in productive ways, focussed on teacher tested sites and not surfing to inappropriate Web sites. Students were proud of their creative efforts and accomplishments.

WebQuests took off. Teachers began creating them in summer graduate courses and staff development sessions. There are thousands of them available, but there is no central location where you can use criteria such as grade level, subject area, or topic to search for an appropriate WebQuest for your class.

Three Methods of Identifying a WebQuest for Use in Your Classroom

ONE:

Considered, by many, the best WebQuest collection



Bernie Dodge's
The WebQuest Page

<http://edweb.sdsu.edu/webquest/webquest.html>

Click on Examples

All of the examples are carefully chosen by Dr. Dodge and are presented in a matrix that includes five levels (K- 3, 4 - 5, 6 - 8, 9 - 12, Adult) and eleven subject areas. There is a one sentence description for each WebQuest listed. All of the WebQuests follow the suggested format and include the following sections: Introduction, Task, Process, Evaluation, Conclusion, and Credits. Visit The Readings and Training Materials page for some excellent background on the use of WebQuests.

TWO:

There are now thousands of WebQuests available on the Internet. You can type the word "WebQuest" into any search engine and find one or more WebQuests at a site. However, you will find that the quality varies greatly. If you have some time to look through them

until you find one that would work well in your curriculum, then you may find some excellent ones. If not, you may want to adapt an existing one or create your own.

THREE:

When you can not find an appropriate WebQuest, you may want to write your own. First visit the Training Materials page on Bernie Dodge's site:

<http://edweb.sdsu.edu/webquest/materials.htm>

There are articles to read about the design process and strategies for "Scaffolding Higher Level Learning".

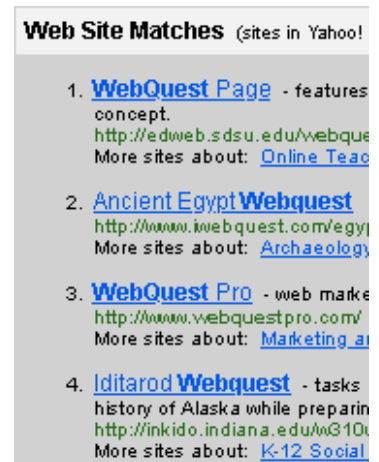
Do not miss the section on building blocks for creating a WebQuest at:

<http://projects.edtech.sandi.net/staffdev/buildingblocks/p-index.htm>



Building your own WebQuest can be a great deal of work. You may want to register for a workshop where you would get feedback as you develop your WebQuest. There is a list of possibilities on the Training Materials Web page, including both face to face and online resources. Scroll down and click on The Disney Learning Partnership to see a high quality

online tutorial.



When locating an existing WebQuest or creating your own:

1. Always keep in mind your own curriculum goals. A WebQuest should enhance your lesson and provide students with opportunities to collaborate with their classmates to solve a problem, and work together on how they will present it to others.
1. Make sure that the content and reading level is appropriate for your students.
1. The Process Section of the WebQuest has the links that your students will use to access information. Make sure they are still valid, from legitimate sources, and that each of them will add some relevant information as your students do their research.

1. Additional WebQuests Resources

Tom March's WebQuests for Learning (<http://ozline.com/webquests/intro.html>)

Tom March's site has a helpful guide to designing them. The rationales included can be used when explaining the purpose of WebQuests to parents and administrators.

Learning and Leading With Technology article on WebQuests

(<http://www.iste.org/L&L/26/7/index.html>)

This article has a listing of different kinds of WebQuests with examples of each one.