

Webquests

Quest: seeking or pursuing something; a search

- developed in early 1995 at San Diego State University by Bernie Dodge with Tom March
- inquiry-oriented
- teacher becomes a guide rather than a feeder of information
- focus on using information rather than looking for it; pointers to resources are included; the learner is not left to wander through webspace
- support learners' thinking at the levels of analysis, synthesis and evaluation

Why webquests?

- critical thinking
 - forces students to transform information into something else: a cluster that maps out the main issues, a comparison, a hypothesis, a solution
 - lots of information and opinions on the topic through which students will sift until they have constructed an understanding that connects to their own prior knowledge and builds new combinations of knowledge that will be refined when students encounter the topic again in the future
- student motivation
 - asked to understand, hypothesize or problem-solve an issue that confronts the real world
 - feedback from an expert allows them to join a community of learners; validates their presence in the world
 - given real up to date resources to work with
 - authentic assessment also motivates students to do their best and come up with a real group answer, not simply something to fulfill an assignment
- cooperative learning
 - develop expertise on a particular aspect or perspective of the topic
 - teammates count on them to bring back real expertise should inspire and motivate learning
- authentic assessment
 - the answer or solution the student teams develop can be posted, emailed or presented to real people for feedback and evaluation
 - By running several WebQuest groups in the same class, students will also see that different solutions were chosen by each team because of the quality of the group members' research and argumentation skills
- technology integration
 - internalized many of the cognitive strategies built into WebQuests, so that students direct and guide their own studies and findings

Components of a Webquest – Student Pages

Introduction: sets the stage and provides some background information

Task: problem/assignment that is doable and interesting.

Process: description of the course of action the learners should go through to accomplish the task broken down into clearly described steps

Information sources: needed to complete the task. Most sources are imbedded within the webquest. Links to web documents, experts available via e-mail or realtime conferencing, searchable databases on the net, and books and other documents physically available in the learner's setting

Learning Advice (Guidance): how to organize the information acquired. providing guiding questions, or directions to complete organizational frameworks such as timelines, concept maps, or cause-and-effect diagrams

Evaluation: rubric or other means to evaluate the final task

Conclusion: brings closure to the quest, reminds the learners about what they've learned, and perhaps encourages them to extend the experience into other domains

Components of a Webquest – Teacher Pages

Introduction: opening statement about the lesson

Process: Describes step by step how the learners will accomplish the task. role descriptions (if any), and guidance on individual steps in the process from the teacher's point of view. Includes hints on implementation and time requirements.

Resources: description of any physical resources needed

Learners: describes the, grade-level, entry level skills and anything a teacher would need to know about the learners this quest was designed for

Evaluation: rubric or other means to evaluate the final task

Conclusion: reflections on the lesson thoughts on extensions of the lesson

Designing a Webquest – getting started

On a sheet of paper, make a chart with four columns: URL of the site, name of the web site, notes about what the site contains, and page category

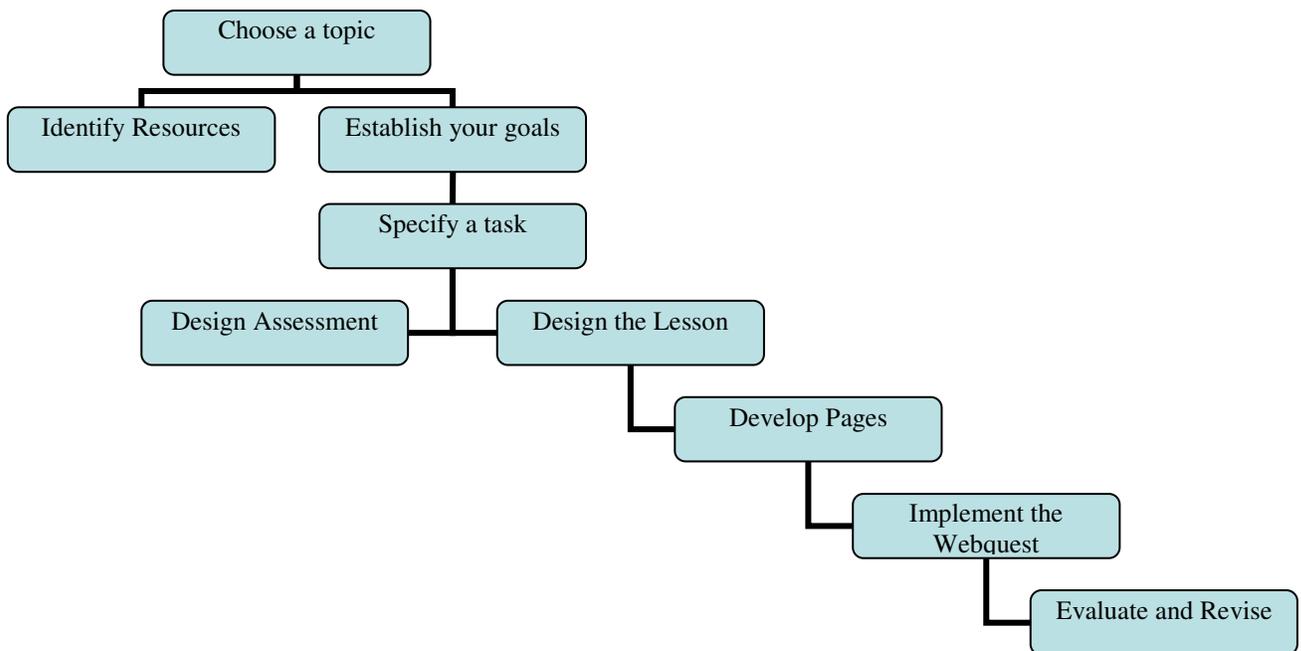
Some possible categories:

Reference materials
 Searchable databases
 Student-written material
 Biographies

Project descriptions
 Lesson plans and ideas
 Contacts with experts

Topic:			Level:
URL	Name of Site	Notes	Category

Once you've looked at 12 or more web sites, and categorized what you've found, brainstorm about the kinds of questions and tasks you could give your learners; These questions and tasks would require them to read and understand some of the information that you found.



Examples:

<http://www.longwood.k12.ny.us/wmi/wq/werner2/index.htm>

<http://www.collier.k12.fl.us/weblessons/cookiewq/index.htm>

http://warrensburg.k12.mo.us/webquest/teacher_quest/index.htm

<http://kathyschrock.net/webquests/index.htm>

<http://webquest.org/>

Resources:

<http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/webquest/wqsl1.html>

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

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

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

http://www.educationworld.com/a_tech/tech/tech011.shtml

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

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

<http://webquest.sdsu.edu/designsteps/index.html>

<http://edweb.sdsu.edu/links/index.html>

<http://webquest.sdsu.edu/designpatterns/all.htm>

<http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/webquest/webquest.html>