

WEBQUESTS

What is a WebQuest?

A WebQuest is an inquiry-oriented activity in which some or all of the information that learners interact with comes from resources on the Internet. They can be long-term projects that last a month or more or short term that take two or three lessons.

What are the advantages of this style of lesson?

- ☺ Internet sites are pre-selected so students don't waste time searching.
- ☺ Students are lead to use higher level thinking to process information.
- ☺ Processing information helps avoid plagiarism.
- ☺ Makes efficient use of the net.
- ☺ Employs cooperative learning (students are in pairs or teams for most).
- ☺ Students will do real world research that is current and up-to-date.
- ☺ Scaffolding provided within the lesson can help lower learners catch up.
- ☺ Lessons are designed to motivate students by capturing their interest.

The Lesson Template:

Introduction:

- Introduces activity in a language that captures student interest.
- Sets the stage for the series of lessons.

Task:

- Describes what the end result of the project will be.
- Outline the technology that students will be using.
- There are many different types of tasks that you can use:
 - ➔ Retelling Tasks: Students absorb information and show that they understand it.
 - These can be introductory and quick and easy.
 - Presentations can be done in HyperStudio, posters, short reports.
 - Format and wording of final product must be significantly different than what it read.
 - Skills of summarizing, distilling and elaborating are required and supported.
 - This may be used as a background for a different type of task.
 - ➔ Compilation Tasks: Taking information from a variety of sources and putting it in a common format (ex. Web page, HyperStudio)
 - Use information that is in a different type of format that must be reworded to present.
 - ➔ Mystery Tasks: Puzzle or detective style tasks that are designed to get student interest.
 - Requires synthesis of information from a variety of sources.
 - Must create a mystery/puzzle that cannot be solved by simply rewriting the information.
 - ➔ Journalistic Tasks: Students act like reporters covering an event.
 - Good to use more than one coverage of the events to ensure accuracy.
 - Broaden student understanding by incorporating divergent opinion in their account.
 - Deepen understanding with background information.
 - Teach students to watch for their own bias.
 - ➔ Design Tasks: Learners create a product or plan of action that accomplishes a pre-determined goal and works within constraints (ex. A budget).
 - Have students design a product that is genuinely needed somewhere by someone.
 - Make the project like a real designer's project.

- ➔ **Creative Product Tasks:** Students learn about the product by recasting the information in a creative way (ex. Poetry).
 - Evaluation emphasizes creativity and self-expression.
 - Constraints are things like historical accuracy and adhering to artistic style.
- ➔ **Consensus Building Tasks:** Requirement that differing viewpoints be articulated, considered and accommodated. Current events and recent history are good for this.
 - Students look at differing resources to take on differing opinions.
 - Based on authentic opinions of those outside the classroom.
- ➔ **Persuasion Tasks:** Goes beyond simple retelling, as students must build a case based on what they have read.
 - Could do a presentation for a mock hearing.
 - Writing a letter/ editorial/ poster /video/ advertisement.
 - Often combined with consensus building.
 - Must have a plausible audience for the message.
- ➔ **Self-Knowledge Tasks:** Students analyze themselves through the WebQuest.
 - Can do long term goal development.
 - Ethical moral issues can be covered this way.
 - Self-improvement.
 - Art appreciation.
 - Students can do personal responses to literature.
- ➔ **Analytical Tasks:** Learners are asked to look closely at one or more things and find similarities and differences and to figure out implications for those similarities and differences.
 - Must go beyond finding the similarities and differences and further process the information. For example, students can infer what the similarities and differences mean.
- ➔ **Judgement Tasks:** Present a number of items and ask students to rate or rank them or to make a decision among a limited number of choices. Often learners play a role while accomplishing these tasks.
 - Either you provide a rubric or other criteria for making judgements or the learners create their own criteria.
 - Learners must explain and defend their own criteria.
- ➔ **Scientific Tasks:** Have students undergo scientific investigations using the Internet.
 - Make hypothesis based on understanding of background information.
 - Testing hypotheses by gathering data from pre-selected sources.
 - Determining whether the hypotheses were supported and describing the results and implications in standard scientific report.
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The Process:

- These are the steps the learner should go through to process the task.
- Includes descriptions of the roles to be played or perspectives to be taken.
- This is also a good place to provide advice for the learner.
- Resources can be embedding in this section of the lesson. For example having places where students click to get the required worksheet.
- Should be short and clear.

Resources:

- Web sites are pre-selected.
- Not restricted to the web. You can also use textbooks, library books, people and any

other resources you would like for the project.

- They can be divided so that some of the resources are to be used by the whole class but others are for subsets of learners in a particular role.

Evaluation:

- Use an evaluation rubric to examine the reaches of Bloom's Taxonomy.
- For more information and online resources for rubrics, visit:
http://edweb.sdsu.edu/triton/july/rubrics/Rubrics_for_Web_Lessons.html

Conclusion:

- Summarize the experience, encourage reflection about the process, extend and generalize what was learned.
- Rounds document and provides closure.
- You can suggest questions for discussion.

Teachers:

- You can add a section for teachers to visit that has a list of the IRPs that are covered by the lesson and tips for teaching the unit.