

WebQuests

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| Method | WebQuests |
| Introduction | |
| <p>A Web Quest or WebQuest is an inquiry-oriented method in which most or all the information that learners work with comes from the web. You can either set up your own web question using a simple word document or you can download different programmes which support web questions online. These can be created using various programmes, including a simple word processing document that includes links to websites. In general terms, a Web Quest is usually classroom-based and related to a specific topic or theme being studied. Secondly it emphasises higher-order thinking (such as analysis, creativity, or criticism) rather than just acquiring information in that students need to select the content they find and compare and contrast different information sources. Thirdly, usually the teaching staff member who sets up the quest will preselect sources, thereby emphasising information use rather than information gathering. Finally, Web Quests lend themselves well to group work with the task frequently being split into roles.</p> | |
| Aim | To increase critical thinking skills amongst students |
| Target group | This method can be used in practically any subject area even though most cases and examples come from the social sciences area. |
| Intended learning outcomes | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students learn where and how to process information related to a given subject • Students learn to analyse and assess information sources • Students learn the skills of presentation and conclusion. | |
| Description | |
| <p>First select a topic on your curriculum that is suitable for a Web Quest</p> <p>Now carefully design your web question. In this, you need to describe and specify exactly what the task is that you will give to students/groups and include in this specification a precise description of how evaluation will take place</p> <p>Prepare a set of online resources – the more extensive the better – related to your topic, avoid sorting and predefining the selection, leave that to the students.</p> <p>Define the timescale for the task allowing enough time for the student/group to complete the task successfully.</p> <p>Review and evaluate the outcomes with the students/groups.</p> <p>This is intended as an out-of-class method for students to prepare in their own time. Apart from the evaluation which should be carried out in class with the whole class reviewing the outputs of the different students/groups.</p> | |
| Preparation | Quite extensive to enhance the chance of success but this method also provides a good opportunity for teaching staff to |

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| | build up their online resources. The task description also requires some preparation. |
| Required resources and equipment | Good internet access available to all participants. |
| Success factors | It helps to have a very large body of sources already identified as this helps to build the students' selection and analytical skills. Make sure to give clear instructions as to exactly what is expected in terms of outcome and to make it clear the balance expected between increasing the students depth of knowledge in a specific subject and analysis and comparison of knowledge sources. |
| Advantages | This method is a great way for students to not only gather their own useful set of resources but also to contribute to the classes' resources as a whole. |
| Disadvantages | This method requires good analytical skills and some prior knowledge of the subject so not very useful when it comes to introducing a subject unless this task is specifically built into the process. |
| Additional information | <p>This is a good intro video for Web Quests</p> <p>Check out this page for a handy guide to different design patterns.</p> <p>This site gives a good overview of the history and applicability of Web Quests worldwide as well as quite a few useful resources.</p> <p>This site is very useful in that it also provides a design methodology for setting up your own web quests.</p> <p>This is another useful site with resources you can apply:</p> |