

Web Quest by Dan Hoffman

What is the level of a Web quest that you wish to work on for your students?

A Web quest is an assignment which asks students to use the World Wide Web to learn about a specific topic and engaged them in the idea of

learning and solving problems on their own. The assignment can be given on paper, certainly the simplest and most portable option. You as a teacher should not treat this assignments not as an envision of technology but part of the current students world. You will discover if you have not already, that the current trend of technology is growing at an exponential rate. You as the teacher must also grow or you will be left behind. **“DO NOT TEACH OBSOLETE EXCELLENCE.”** Your web quest assignment can also be given on the Web itself by sending students to a Web page which serves as the "starting point" for the student's information search. You may do this if you as a teacher already have created a web page for your classroom. If you do not have a web page then you may do this a different way. You can open up a word document and on the word document you may place the URL (addresses where the students should go for information). In my own humble opinion a web quest may be in several different levels. You discovered on this web page that was created for you many ideas and examples for you to work from.

Purpose of a Web quest

Time is very important in your classroom. You do not want to waste any of it. If you are a professional teacher you must plan ahead as to what is going to be taught, when it is going to be taught and how it is going to be taught. You must adjust your pedagogy. The current paradigm shifts in education and technology pilot you to adjust how you teach. Please do not be one of those teachers who have taught this one way for years and never changes. Now that we covered that topic as best I can in this information sheet. Then why should you take the time to create a Web quest? The best reason is that, like any carefully planned lesson, a good Web quest makes learning interesting for your students. A good Web quest puts the power of the Web behind your topic. You may show students or let them discover for themselves. Web sites can take your students on a virtual journey to anywhere in the world! You will find below some concepts.

1. **(SIMPLE - PASSIVE)** You tell the students where to go and they write down what they observe. This is not completely passive but again it is not really engaged learning. You may wish to do this as the first web quest or at a lower grade or adjust it to your class ability. If you are new at web quest this may be your first lesson. This allows you to become comfortable with the Internet, web pages and importantly some websites not always available. The Internet is a living entity it changes with time. Make sure you confirm out your website links at school and not home. The school has a filter for educational learning and your home computer does not.
2. **(ADVANCED – STAGE 1 OF ENGAGED)** You again design where your students are to look for answers but this time you have prepared questions for them. Once they have found the website allowing them to determine answers that are open ended.

3. **(ADVANCED – STAGE 2 OF ENGAGED)** You have your students decided on their own topic in the region or the area you are presenting to them, (Math – Science - Social Studies – Language Arts). You may want to have two or more students collaborate on this assignment. The students will create this web quest using two or three methods of presentation (Word - Power Point – Smart Board). All three maybe used for hyper linking to the Internet. Please remember that you may create a power point and convert it to Smart Board. You do not need to use all three together but it is very possible for you to do so.

Some simples steps to guide you on your journey to a good web quest.

1.	<p>This tutorial introduces you to Web quests – an Internet activity which lets you create something useful for your students while increasing your Web "comfort level" at the same time. A well-designed Web quest lets you turn your students loose on the Web for a specific class project and get learning results that you and your students will enjoy.</p> <p>A couple of things you need to know: You should be able to turn a computer on and off, and you should know how to access the Internet, either from school or at home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You should also be able to use a Web browser and understand how to use the buttons, bookmarks, etc. • You should know what a URL is.
2.	<p>So what makes a Web quest a success? Before answering this question, note that the characteristics of a good Web quest are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general theme • It puts content into context • Highly Visual (pictures, sounds, maps) • Uses material that is age and ability appropriate • Easy to use • A process of evaluation (assignments, tasks or reports) <p>Remember: Make sure your Web quest is closely related to the rest of your in-class content. The more closely it's related, the more powerful it will be!</p>
3.	<p>Before you begin designing your Web quest, you should also consider the operating constraints under which the quest will be used. If you ignore these details, your quest may not work in the way you want it to.</p> <p>Important Considerations Always answer a few simple questions before designing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you want students to work on the Web quests in class or at home? • If you're allowing young students to work on a web quest at home, do you have some assurance that parents will support and supervise the activity? • If only working at school, do you have enough computers? A computer lab available? • Will students work in teams rather than individually on their projects?

4.	<p>Now that you have defined the elements of your web quest, you're ready to begin locating materials to include. We suggest a couple of ways to get started. Both assume that you have already selected a topic for your web quest.</p> <p>Types of Searching</p> <p>If you have already found at least one web site for your topic that you like, try reviewing the links contained on that site. Most likely, they will lead you to other interesting sites. As always, when you find an important site, bookmark it. This is good way to find material and resources.</p> <p>Another way is using a structure search. This is the process of using search engines to find and bookmark sites that may be useful for your Web quest. Searching the Web can be frustrating if not done properly. Here are some tips to keep your searches successful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a search engine like Google or Yahoo. While there are many engines, both of these engines are consistent. Also for teachers, it's important to remember "kid safe" searches like Yahooligans, Kids Click, Ask Jeeves for Kids and Lycos Zone. All of these are excellent places to begin your search!
5.	<p>Once you have an interesting list of search results, make a few quick checks:</p> <p>Check the URLs – A site's URL can tell you a lot about the quality of the content it might contain. College and university sites typically end in .edu and can often be a great source of accurate information. For K-12 teachers, other schools' pages are often a useful resource. These sites often end in .k12.us.</p> <p>Make sure the site's intent fits your needs and is appropriate for your students - Be sure that your sources deal with your topic in a way that fits your own needs.</p> <p>Check the reading level – Many sites written for general audiences may not be suitable for younger readers.</p> <p>Try to avoid another student's work – The Web is a great way to share student accomplishments. Just remember that posting something on the Web doesn't guarantee its accuracy.</p> <p>Stay with factual information - Depending on the age of your students, you can either filter this bias in your selection of resources or include sites which have specific points of view. Facts are easier to use and grade.</p>
6.	<p>Organizing Your Sites</p> <p>Once you have selected a group of sites that fit your needs, take a look at them as a group.</p> <p>Now, answer these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there common themes or contrasts that your Web quest could incorporate in your lesson? • Does the list of sites offer different opinions or perspectives on the topic? <p>Remember: The strength of a Web quest is its ability to combine resources to bring out common themes.</p> <p>Navigation: Write your quest so that students move logically from one site to another. Make suggestions to them about how they should view the site and what to look for! Don't forget, you are their guide!</p> <p>Great Idea: Make sure you bookmark any valuable sites you find when searching for Web quest resources. A new site to day may be a new quest tomorrow! WHAT I WOULD DO! I would create a word document save it as WEB QUEST IDEAS Paste your new found links here and save it. Remember where you save it however.</p>
7.	<p>What your Web quest looks like depends on how it will be used. Here are some common types:</p> <p>Write the quest on paper. This is by far the easiest and most portable Web quest to create. This allows students to work at school, home or in a computer lab to complete their assignment... The resources you have found are where they will search for their answers.</p> <p>Use a presentation software PowerPoint or Smart Board. This type is dynamic but it's much more time consuming, less portable and takes a lot more work.</p> <p>Create a Web quest Web page - This type will speed up your students' progress through the quest, but it's a much more time-consuming process for the teacher.</p>

8. Just like any first, don't expect the results to be perfect. It may take some adjusting to get the results you're looking for on your first Web quest!

Some potential concerns

Students want to do more- Find some additional sites that have higher level content.

Students don't understand - Try restating the Task section of the Web quest Work sheet - Sometimes all it takes is a better introduction. You should find this on the main web page where you found this document.

Students get bored – Add higher-level content or sites with more multimedia material.

Students can't follow directions– Use smaller steps to explain your directions. Keep things simple!

If the computers don't work or the Internet is unavailable, have a back-up lesson ready for your unit - Check before hand to make sure that the Internet site you are using is available a couple of hours before you begin. If a major part of the quest is unavailable, postpone until another day.

9. Students learn in different ways, and Web quests are a great way to let students follow their interests within an assigned theme or topic. Always try to give your students several quest presentation options for your class.

Types of student presentations

- A written report
- An oral presentation
- A drawing
- Another Web page
- Power Point
- Smart Board
- Smart board may contain Word, Power Point, Hyper links