Designing a WebQuest (2.0)

By Tom March, 2009

This is an activity sheet that goes with "WebQuest 2.0: It's Process, not 'Parts'":

http://tommarch.com/files/tmarch_WebQuests_2009.pdf

An earlier version of a complete WebQuest Design process is available online at:
http://tommarch.com/writings/wq_design.php

> **Note:** a WebQuest may emerge from Look to Learn activities and the use of a ClassPortal. The following process if for when you want to provide a WebQuest on a specific area within the curriculum.

Discovering a Topic

Explore syllabus, standards, course descriptions, textbooks, frameworks, etc. used at your school for topics that:

- Are rich enough to investigate
- Are often misunderstood by students
- Present inherent complexities
- Are the source of debate
- Are open to interpretation
- Any topic that is easily made Real, Rich and Relevant

Good for WebQuests	*Not Great for WebQuests*
– Our Community: 2020	– Jobs in Our Community
– Plants' adaptations to environments	– Photosynthesis
– The Purpose and Power of Poetry	– The Literary Elements of Poetry
– Republican Australia	– Federation
– Designing Classifications for Elements	– The Periodic Table
– The Essence of Being Australia	– "Australia between the Wars"
– Predicting Weather Patterns	– The Types of Clouds
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Engagements

   * You can skip on to the next step if you don't have enough resources yet.

1. Find or create one or a few Look to Learn activities that reveal what's Real, Rich and Relevant about the topic.

2. Post or link to these from your class online space.

Brainstorming

Use a Stixyboard to help each other with topic ideas, links, activities, etc. If you have your own Web space for the project (a Wordpress blog or your page in Ning), add a link in your Stixy post and encourage people to add their comments there.

Information Gathering

1. Use Clipmarks to surf the topic. Be sure to explore things like YouTube, the TEDTalks tag listing, TagGalaxy, The Thinker Imagebase, Google News, Pageflakes, etc.

2. Try to resist your regular curriculum resources at this stage.

3. Return to Engagements if you haven't already found at least one rich Look to Learn activity to start student engagement.

Learning Paths

1. Consider how you will shape a range of Learning Paths that students might adopt and adapt. Look for things that naturally emerge from the topic:
   – Roles,
   – Tasks,
   – Subtopics,
   – Professions,
   – Perspectives, etc.

2. Depending on the students' age and ability factors, you might to make these Learning Paths more explicit and scaffolded or informal and problem-based.

3. Brainstorm Big Questions that can shape the WebQuest's overall purpose.

4. Start to imagine what student creations would represent clear demonstrations of learning. Give deep thought to how to frame the demonstrations so that students cannot avoid constructing new meaning, transforming information into new understanding. **This is the hardest part of your design task.**

5. Consider using the CEQ-ALL rubric as a framework for students' self-managed learning.

Emerging Expertise

1. Find some favorite scaffolds that you anticipate being helpful given the topic and students' past achievements.

2. Collect Quality and near-Quality examples to help students see what they can aspire to.

3. Gather relevant Standards and evaluation measures so that they might be used to confirm students' achievements of Competency.

Contribute Innovation

If you maintain a ClassPortal, you already have the best means for students to contribute their innovative creations. Anything that can be made digitally, can be published from a Web space:

Articles and essays	Movies and animations
"Man-on-the-street" interviews	Large-scale surveys
Original music or music videos	Mash-ups of different media
Presentations and photo galleries	Political / social commentary cartoons
Poetry and collections	Public service announcements
Awareness campaigns	Interviews

(Reflection)

What routines do you have in place to support ongoing and naturally occurring reflections? Do students have Author privileges on a blog or wiki or do you use Ning or a content management system or Intranet where students can keep a journal of reflections.