

**Title of Session:** WebQuests in the Developing World

**Moderator:** Bernie Dodge

**Title of File:** 20040331wq

**Date:** March 31, 2004

Room: After School Online

**SusanR:** I am standing in for BJB this evening. I will be facilitating for Dr. Bernie Dodge.

**SusanR:** He should be here momentarily.

**TriciaR:** I guess I was correct. good news! thanks Susan.

**TerryLC:** That is good news!

**SusanR:** . o O ( In the meantime... )

**SusanR:** Would you like to browse Bernie's Blog?

**TriciaR:** sure, please post the url.

**TerryLC:** Sounds good

**SusanR:** It's his own web page .. <http://home.earthlink.net/~bdodge/blog/>

**SusanR:** Where's Bernie..I can see that he has quite a busy schedule ...

<http://edweb.sdsu.edu/people/bdodge/wheresbernie/>

**SusanR:** Take a look at this math Matrix.

<http://webquest.sdsu.edu/matrix/3-5-Mat.htm>

**SusanR:** The baseball Webquest is topical at this time of year.

**SusanR:** Let's get started..perhaps Bernie will arrive shortly.

**SusanR:** Can we start with intros..that way we can gear the discussion to your interests

**SusanR:** ..and perhaps we can share some ideas and webquest sites

**DavinaP:** sounds great

**AdrienneH:** Hi, I'm Adrienne, and I teach in a local university in SW La and love the whole webquest thing

**BernieD** joined the room.

**SandraAr:** sure, well I am a pre-service teacher in Texas. I have seen webquests before and have actually created one in a technology class I had

**BernieD:** My apologies!

**SandraAr:** no prob, Bernie

**SusanR:** clap clap..Bernie has arrived!!

**TerryLC:** Glad you are here

**DavinaP:** clap! clap!

**SusanR:** Hi Bernie. I am standing in for BJB.

**BernieD:** Normally my wife picks up my son after school but couldn't today.

**TriciaR:** I'm Tricia Ryan, teacher educator at Towson University in Maryland. and doctoral student at university of Maryland. Bernie, it's very nice to see that you have arrived. We were starting introductions.

**AndreaYH:** Hi, I'm Andrea. I am a pre-service teacher in Houston, Tx

**BernieD:** Please go ahead.

**MeshiaH:** I am Meshia and I am a pre-service teacher in Houston, Tx.

**SusanR:** . o O ( we are doing intros, Bernie )

**LaverneR:** Hi! I am new to Tapped In & WebQuest. I am creating an online Business Ethic & Career Development course for our continuing ed program at the Community College of Baltimore County. I am glad to be here.

**TerryLC:** I'm a technology facilitator in Calcasieu Parish

**StefanieS:** I'm Stefanie Shaffer, undergraduate at the University of Maryland and creating a web-based mentoring program at the university

**KathieS:** I am a middle school technology teacher in MA.

**DaisGst10:** Hi...my name is Dais (dice) and I'm an undergrad student at the Univ of Md and my wife is a elementary school teacher in D.C.

**TriciaR:** Bernie, I'd like to see how you introduce yourself:)

**DavinaP:** I'm Davina teacher educator at the University of Maryland--glad to meet everyone--a nice turn out

**BernieD:** I'm Bernie Dodge, professor of ed tech at San Diego State University, father of Alex, and sitting in a Starbucks.

**BernieD:** is that everyone?

**SusanR:** Cool

**BernieD:** Let's get started, then.

**BernieD:** Tonight the burning question is How can you do a WebQuest without the web.

**BernieD:** I'll tell you in a few minutes how that question got to be important to me recently, but first some background.

**BernieD:** Much has been written about the digital divide. Even though some countries like China are coming online at an amazing pace, the fact remains that hundreds of millions of people in the world have never made a phone call. As we become increasingly interconnected in the developed world, we are likely to leave major parts of the world even further behind. What's to be done about that?

**BernieD:** One proposed solution is to develop very cheap networkable computers designed especially for use in the developing world. The Simputer, after years of dead ends, was finally released for production just last week.

**BernieD:** Here's a web site with news about Simputer.

**BernieD:** [http://news.com.com/2100-1041\\_3-5181303.html?tag=nefd\\_top](http://news.com.com/2100-1041_3-5181303.html?tag=nefd_top)

**BernieD:** Take a quick look at that site.

**BernieD:** Interesting, no?

**TriciaR:** yes, interesting as a way to bridge the digital divide.

**AndreaYH:** very interesting!

**TerryLC:** looks like a simple handheld

**DaisGst10:** yes very...

**SandraAr:** I agree

**BernieD:** Simple is good.

**MeshiaH:** neat tool

**SandraAr:** looks very simple

**BernieD:** Another expense that American schools can barely afford is the software needed to keep a school stocked with productive tools. Even with lab packs and educational discounts, the cost is high and this year budgets are tighter than ever. Imagine how much bleaker it must seem to a school in sub-Saharan Africa. Under conditions like this, the appeal of open source software is very intense. The government of India, for

example, is beginning to break its dependence on Microsoft products and turn more and more to free software. And just recently a gathering of software developers in Africa met to plan how to meet that continent's needs through open source initiatives.

**BernieD:** You can read about the Africa Source meeting here:

<http://www.tacticaltech.org/node/view/88>

**DavinaP:** Linux open source excellent!

**BernieD:** You can read that later. There are lots of blogs linked to it.

**BernieD:** You will all, by the way, be getting a transcript of this for later exploration so don't sweat it.

**BernieD:** So, what if you've overcome the problems of software and hardware cost and you've got a school that's gotten support to get at least a slow connection to the internet and at least a few computers, what do you encourage teachers to do with that? A smart thing to do would be to encourage the use of easy-to-learn applications of technology. There's an organization called the TLT Group, that doesn't deal with the developing world but their mission is relevant to this discussion. They focus on getting colleges and universities to use technology intelligently and in some ways an American college history professor is at the same point pedagogically as a secondary history teacher in Zimbabwe: wed to the lecture method and the textbook.

**BernieD:** (Or is that only true at San Diego State?)

**TriciaR:** no, I think it's a fair statement.

**BernieD:** The TLT group has developed a collection of what they call "Low Threshold Activities" to lure these professors into the 21st Century and they're quite good.

**BernieD:** What is an LTA? You can see a complete slide show on the topic at

**BernieD:**

[http://www.tltgroup.org/LTAs/LTAAnsoorgeBowersHarrisWebcast2-12-02\\_files/v3\\_document.htm](http://www.tltgroup.org/LTAs/LTAAnsoorgeBowersHarrisWebcast2-12-02_files/v3_document.htm)

**BernieD:** Again, that's for later exploration.

**BernieD:** You can explore the archives of LTA's at

<http://tc.unl.edu/cansorge/lta/archive.html>

**BernieD:** Take a minute to look at those.

**BernieD:** Nice little things you can pick up in a few minutes.

**TerryLC:** I see some things there that I would like to read

**AndreaYH:** me too!

**TriciaR:** yes, the archives seem similar to online tutorials.

**BernieD:** The TLT group has also organized a terrific set of recommendations wrapped around 7 principles of learning.

**BernieD:** [http://www.tltgroup.org/Seven/Library\\_TOC.htm](http://www.tltgroup.org/Seven/Library_TOC.htm)

**SandraAr:** wow, those archives look interesting

**SandraAr:** definitely something to look at more closely

**MeshiaH:** I agree with Sandra

**BernieD:** So now, to the developing world and the question of the hour.

**BernieD:** Earlier this month I had the pleasure of working with a group I'd never heard of before. The organization is called World-Links, and their mission is to improve the education of students in the developing world by providing staff development for teachers. The project is now in 26 countries and demand is growing.

**BernieD:** You can learn more about the organization here: <http://world-links.org/english/html/about.html>

**BernieD:** Take a few minutes to explore that page.

**SandraAr:** that is impressive

**BernieD:** Any comments on World Links? Have any of you heard of them before?

**DaisGst10:** sounds like a really interesting org...never heard of them before

**SandraAr:** no I had never heard about them before

**AndreaYH:** never heard of them

**StefanieS:** I hadn't either

**TriciaR:** world links provides cd roms and web based versions of professional development. sri international is involved.

**BernieD:** Pretty well-kept secret. They were started by the World Bank and are now on their own.

**TerryLC:** It's interesting how the schools they work with remain "up and running" after 4 years...sounds like a strong program

**TriciaR:** I'd like to hear about the role you play with world links, Bernie.

**BernieD:** The reason that World-Links invited me to Washington was to help them think about ways to extend what they're doing with teachers around the globe. For the last 7 years they've been using telecollaboration projects as the core of their staff development curriculum. Teachers progress through a sequence of activities that takes them from computer literacy to information literacy with a heavy underlying dose of constructivism. That's a lot of change all at once, so the program typically extends over a two year period.

**DavinaP:** I have heard of them- our ED policy Dept international programs in the COE- does some work

**BernieD:** Lately they've been thinking about additional project types to include in the curriculum and WebQuests popped onto their radar. So when they asked me to participate, the leading question was this: how can you do a WebQuest without the web?

**BernieD:** Let me throw that question back out to you. What would you say?

**TriciaR:** blue squirrel web whacker

**MeshiaH:** don't know....sorry

**BernieD:** So... capture sites and bring them over to non-networked computers. Good.

**AndreaYH:** I have no idea.

**BernieD:** Any other thoughts?

**LaverneR:** I don't have any idea!

**TriciaR:** still thinking..

**StefanieS:** If the school has no computer capabilities, books can be made where students "follow links"

**BernieD** nods

**StefanieS:** like in choose your own adventures. with dead ends when the students looked in the wrong place

**TerryLC:** They could have resources from the library

**BernieD:** Books still work.

**SandraAr:** that is true Bernie

**TriciaR:** I'm thinking of the simple computers you mentioned earlier that look similar to pda's.

**TerryLC:** what about other resources such as video, microfilm, newspapers, etc.

**BernieD:** (Librarians go all a-flutter when I say that)

**BernieD:** Well... a school with few computers isn't likely to have microfilm, lots of newspapers, or video.

**TerryLC:** I was just thinking about that

**StefanieS:** I don't think they'd have extensive libraries either, though

**LaverneR:** almost everyone uses a cell phone, can that be use instead of the web

**BernieD:** In fact, the kind of school we're thinking of is like the one I taught at in Sierra Leone.

**TriciaR:** simputer with open source software.

**StefanieS:** The problem I see with using books is that it is very linear, nothing like finding information on the Internet

**BernieD:** We had a one-room library with books donated by the US Embassy and the Brits. No periodicals at all. No video. Electricity was sporadic. The humidity was a constant threat to all technology or paper.

**BernieD:** Hard to picture a WebQuest-like experience under those conditions, but not impossible.

**AndreaYH:** Well what did you do?

**BernieD:** Back then? I didn't know about WebQuests yet. I did direct instruction.

**TerryLC:** I guess you had to be a bit creative

**BernieD:** In fact, our school year started in September but our textbooks didn't arrive until February so for half the year I was the textbook. Me and the blackboard were the center of attention (at least in theory).

**BernieD:** Here's a fairly typical WebQuest. Let's look at how we might teach it in a technologically-deprived classroom.

**BernieD:** <http://oncampus.richmond.edu/academics/education/projects/webquests/egypt/>

**SandraAr:** well that is the role of teacher...to make modifications and adjustments

**MeshiaH:** exactly...

**BernieD:** Take a few minutes to explore the lesson. Then tell me how you could do it with only one computer connected to the internet.

**TriciaR:** in this one-computer classroom, is printing limited?

**StefanieS:** Everyone in the class could have X amount of time to use the computer, with each student having a very specific topic/idea to explore. Then all the students could pool their information to create the final project. Over 5 days, students should have sufficient time to complete the activity if each is focused on a very specific task.

**SandraAr:** they could be in small groups

**SandraAr:** and share time like Stefanie said

**MeshiaH:** The children can rotate sharing the computers

**DaisGst10:** time share in groups

**BernieD:** Let's imagine that you can print to your heart's content within reason.

**AndreaYH:** Good idea Stephanie.

**StefanieS:** thanks

**SandraAr:** you could reprint the lesson and the images

**MeshiaH:** great idea Sandra

**TriciaR:** content can be printed from the online resources, the tasks can be completed by reading the information in print form. the webquest can be used as a demonstration

format to guide students through the process. **BernieD:** So... some of the links in this lesson could be printed out and made available in a pile somewhere in the room.

**StefanieS:** that's a good idea, Tricia

**TriciaR:** ...unless, of course, everyone has a simputer.

**BernieD:** For sites that don't print well because they involve animation or color or sound, let kids rotate through the one station.

**MindM:** Hello, I am new to this forum. Is it possible for me to read what has been discussed already?

**BernieD:** And maybe some of the URLs could be replaced by books from the library.

**SandraAr:** that sounds reasonable Bernie

**TriciaR:** yes, that sounds like an appropriate alternative.

**SusanR:** There will be an archived transcript, MindM

**BernieD:** So, technologically, it's not that big a deal to do a WebQuest with very limited resources.

**SandraAr:** true

**MindM:** What is a WebQuest?

**BernieD:** The big river to cross, I think, is getting the teacher in that room ready to teach this way.

**TerryLC:** I agree. Most teachers print the Internet resources (if they aren't too extensive) just in case the network fails.

**BernieD:** A wise idea. Plan B.

**BernieD:** Here's a picture I often use that illustrates the WebQuest way.

**BernieD:** <http://webquest.sdsu.edu/images/scaffolding.jpg>

**LaverneR:** There is always the overheads & Powerpoint

**DavinaP:** so would you call it something different since it is not really a webquest? a hybrid? or back to a project based adventure?

**BernieD:** I'd still call it a WebQuest if the kids had to use higher level thinking skills, transform information and used information from the web, even if indirectly.

**StefanieS:** I think powerpoint would be really effective to simulate a WebQuest, especially when links to web pages saved on the hard drive of a simputer can be embedded in the presentation. that was a great idea, Laverne.

**BernieD:** The difference is only mechanical, not philosophical.

**TerryLC:** How easy is it to prepare a WebQuest on a simputer? Do they have full size keyboards?

**BernieD:** Yes... I met two teachers at ASCD last week who have their teachers create WebQuest in Powerpoint using templates that they've developed. It's still a WebQuest even without the HTML.

**BernieD:** Dunno. We'll have to wait and see.

**BernieD:** So in preparing to work with World Links, I decided that the best way to think about this was to strip WebQuests down to the essential elements.

**BernieD:** This is what I think they are:

**BernieD:** 1. A single, focused, challenging task that requires higher level thinking and the application of content knowledge

**BernieD:** 2. Pre-selected information resources with the information required to accomplish the task

**BernieD:** 3. Guidance in understanding and using the information

**AndreaYH:** Sounds like a good definition to me.

**BernieD:** And if you've got all that, even if it's delivered serially by kids cycling through a single computer or looking at websites printed out, you still have a WebQuest.

**TerryLC:** Do you think the investigations would be limited in any way?

**SandraAr:** what do you mean Terry?

**StefanieS:** I think the limitation would be that students will have less of an opportunity to fail.

**BernieD:** Probably so, Terry. No room for serendipitous discoveries. But it's still a step forward in an environment that doesn't have much to work with.

**StefanieS:** Less of an opportunity to reach dead ends and have to find new ways to get the answers they seek.

**SandraAr:** well the resources could limit if they are pre-selected by the teacher

**TerryLC:** I'm thinking that there are vast amount of information out there. We want students to be thinkers and guide their own learning. Would they be limited. I guess that's where the creativity on the teacher's part would come into play.

**BernieD:** Well... in highly structured WebQuests, which is what I would recommend in the early stages in developing countries, you don't want that kind of failure anyway. That comes later as you move towards more open-ended inquiry.

**TerryLC:** Thanks for keeping me on track...I get ahead of myself

**SandraAr:** true

**BernieD:** With that, I'm afraid our hour is up.

**SandraAr:** Plus, you want the teacher to be successful too not just the students

**StefanieS:** Thank you, Bernie, for your insight

**SusanR:** Bernie..wonderful session..lots to ponder.

**BernieD:** Looks like the next group is banging on the door to get in.

**TerryLC:** Thank you so much Bernie. It was a pleasure to chat with you. I will investigate the websites later

**AndreaYH:** Thanks Bernie

**SandraAr:** I agree with Susan....we only think about what we have and not really what other countries are lacking

LynneW: Thank you for the wonderful resources.

**MeshiaH:** thanks Bernie

**LaverneR:** Thanks Bernie this will truly be a learning adventure for the teacher and the students

**TriciaR:** speaking of the comfort level, that brings us back to the low threshold applications or Ita's. thank you, Bernie. your talk was enlightening in many ways.

**BernieD:** Thank you all for coming. Hope to see some of you back on April 19 when the topic is Martian WebQuests.

**SusanR:** Will you be presenting here in the ASO in April, Bernie?

**SandraAr:** lots to think about

**DavinaP:** excellent resources--thanks so much

**BernieD:** Yes, ASO

**AdrienneH:** Thanks! The hour was too short!

**BernieD:** Bye all.